

Texas AquaNotes



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President's Corner

As many of you know, I had an unfortunate run in with a catfish spine a few weeks back and had to make an unscheduled visit to the doctor, which resulted in hand surgery that will take a little time to get over, hurts like hell and is in general a major annoyance! I can't type, shave, feed fish...Because of said catfish spine incident; I regrettably was not able to attend the 4P's workshop in San Marcos. From what I've heard through the grapevine, it was an opportunity to gain some useful knowledge about how to "preach the gospel of Texas aquaculture". Rob Schmid did an excellent job to make sure 4 P's workshop was brought to Texas through National Aquaculture Association and the United Soybean Board. Sorry I missed it. Read more in this issue of AquaNotes.

Thanks to Rob Schmid and Brian Brawner, TAA was present at the annual Ag Teacher's meeting in Arlington at the end of July. Thanks for taking the time from your jobs to represent TAA at this event. Be sure to read more about the VATAT program in this issue.

Moving on; there's little need to complain about the weather; we're all singing the same song. The good news is that we are that much closer to the fall season with cooler temperature and hopefully some RAIN! No need to complain about feed prices either; again, we're all singing the same song.

There are a few bright spots out there in the aquaculture world; catfish prices are still holding up very well. The shrimp producers are already harvesting some of their crops and have pre-sold their production in some markets. The demand for seafood remains steady and stable. We just need to figure out how to gain more market share. Speaking of markets, I heard that the Texas Agri-Life Extension folks are picking up the tab for having MarketMakers here in Texas. There's an article elsewhere in this newsletter about that. That's a good deal. I invite you all to take advantage of the opportunity.

The 42nd Annual Conference & Trade Show is just 5 months away. Even though it seems too soon to be thinking about it, we could sure use your input regarding topics for speaker presentations, exhibitors you'd like to see there and any other specifics you'd like for the conference (like more of those tasty alternative seafood products!). And, it's never too early to register. Donna and Cindy are always holding their breaths in the middle of December, wondering who is waiting to sign up, will we have enough food, will we have enough chairs, will we have enough booths in the Trade Show, will we have time to include everyone in the Conference Packet, have we contacted everyone, etc. The list goes on and on. I suspect there are a few sleepless nights filled with worry. So surprise them, sign up now.

That's enough for now. Be safe; drink plenty of water when you're out there in that HOT August sun. Take every opportunity to promote Texas aquaculture, maintain good culture practices, make a good impression, and keep your eye on the press. Use your 4P's tool box to spread the good word and call for help if you need it.

Mark Kubecka
TAA President

Happenings at Texas Parks and Wildlife: Inland Fisheries

By: Rob Schmid

In reviewing the last TPWD Happenings article; among other things, we were praying for rain. We still are! Aren't we all? As I'm writing this article, I'm keeping an eye on the progress and promise of Tropical Storm Don, but, he's showing little hope of making it as far north as the San Marcos area. At the moment, I'm pinning my hopes on the series of weather events starting to form off the coast of Africa and South America. How's talking about the weather, as an ice breaker for this installment of the TPWD Happenings? Certainly, the desperate need for rain is on everyone's mind.

All five of the Inland Fisheries Division hatcheries are in some "stage" of drought management. Dundee may be out of water by the first of September. Possum Kingdom and TFFC will have water use restrictions imposed shortly. Jasper's old hatchery simply does not have any water flow. They are just sitting static. AE wood is in and out of stage 1 restrictions. The San Marcos River fluctuates above and below 100 cfs, which is the trigger flow rate for us to start recirculating. We started recirculating about the second week in July and will continue as long as we have adequate water flow.

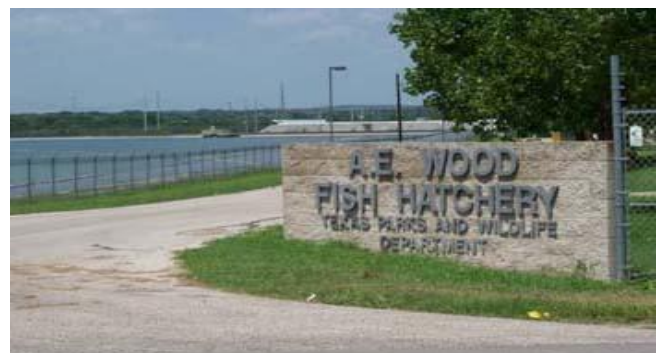
What happens at the hatcheries, if we run out of water? Broodstock are the number one priority. We will sacrifice, or stock out early, any fingerlings on sight, to preserve enough water to manage our broodstock populations. We will restrict feeding, and reduce densities, to ease the stress and prolong the health of these fish we've invested a fair bit of time and money in. Saving the broodstock means being able to pick up the program again, as soon as water is available.

We had great successes thus far this year. Hatchery wide we set a new Florida largemouth bass production record, reaching 10,000,000+ fingerlings stocked, for the first time in the history of

the Agency. We also successfully met the request for Guadalupe bass, with about 170,000 fingerlings being stocked into the South Llano River and about 225,000 native largemouth, black bass, stocked around the state. AE Wood has spawned STB/HSB in the past, but have not attempted to grow-out fingerlings till this last spring. A little over 400,000 fingerlings were stocked out from AE Wood.

The BIG news coming out of TPWD relates to the state wide budget cuts. Agency wide, TPWD lost about 285 positions and cut or reduced a number of programs. Through current vacancies, pending retirements, and such, only 105 positions had to be RIF'd. Looking at it from the point of view of, "my position wasn't RIF'd" it doesn't look so bad. But, to those who were RIF'd it looks pretty bleak. My long time friend, Joedy Grey, the "exotic species permit writer" was one of the casualties of the process. If there's good news in such a situation, it was that Joedy was eligible to retire, and did so. We may see a bit more of Joedy at upcoming TAA events, now that he's a man of leisure!

Now that the legislative session is over, the budgets are set, the RIF's have occurred; it's our job and our responsibility to pick up and carry on, doing whatever it takes to continue to get the job done, deliver the promise and fulfill the mission. It's still a great organization to work for and it's still a great job to have; raising fish, stocking fish and interacting with excited, enthusiastic fishermen, who enjoy and appreciate our efforts!



Leadership Changes at UT Marine Science Institute and the Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory

By: Dan Parker, Reporter; Port Aransas South Jetty

This article was edited by Robert Schmid, but the content remains primarily Dan Parkers work. Leadership changes are taking place at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute and the Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory (FAML), a part of the institute.

Joan Holt is planning to retire as director of FAML. Lee Fuiman said he plans to resign as director of the institute and move into Holt's position.

Fuiman, 57, said details of the timing of the move haven't been solidified, but he believes his resignation will be effective Aug. 31. He has been director for seven years.

Holt said she plans to leave in late August. She said she originally retired in August last year, but she soon went back to work at FAML, part-time, until her replacement could be found. Holt will be the acting Chair of the Marine Science Department beginning in September while they search for a replacement for L. Fuiman.

Holt was hired as a research associate at the Marine Science Institute in 1977 and then moved on to the Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory two years later. Holt's specialty has to do with larval fish biology and culture. Her first job involved raising red drum larvae. It was the first time the fish had been raised in captivity. She worked under Connie Arnold, a fellow pioneer in the field. Holt has been director of FAML for the past 10 years. After she retires, she'll be a professor emerita and maintain an office at the Marine Science Institute.

She said she's working on a book about marine ornamental fish, which she has raised at FAML. Over the years, 26 students have performed research under Holt to get their master's or doctoral degrees. She trained eight post-doctoral fellows. "I'm really proud of all of the students I've been able to train, and of our research that has been done with cobia – ling – and the southern flounder," Holt said. "Parks and wildlife has said (flounder) were in

trouble, and they were interested in developing methods to raise those and release them for stocking, and so our research enabled them to learn more about how to do that." She said she's also proud of her international collaborations with scientists from countries including Japan, Norway, Portugal, Scotland and Italy.

Holt twice has won the Researcher of the Year Award from the Texas Aquaculture Association. She also was inducted into the Port Aransas Boatmen Hall of Fame in 2009 and received the Public Service Award and Chairman's Award from the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation and the Harvey Weil Sportsman Conservationist Trust Award. Holt's husband, Scott, retired from his work as a fisheries biologist in 2009 and now serves as a Marine Science Institute research fellow. Joan said she and her husband don't plan on moving away from Port Aransas. She will continue to serve on the Nueces County Water Control and Improvement District board of directors. Scott is a member of the city's Parks and Recreation Board.

The Texas House of Representatives recently passed a resolution honoring Joan for achievements she made during her career. The resolution points out that Joan is author of 16 book chapters and nearly 100 papers published in Aquaculture, the Journal of Sea Research, the Journal of Fish Biology and other scholarly publications. "Dr. Holt is highly regarded for her expertise and groundbreaking research in fish ecology, captive culture and development," the resolution states. "Her work in the early life history of marine fish species has proven invaluable to those engaged in issues involving this precious resource." Scott received the same kind of Legislative honor when he retired. The resolutions recognizing the Holts were authored by Rep. Todd Hunter, R-Corpus Christi.

Questions? Comments? Contact Dan Parker at (361) 749-5131 or dan@portasouthjetty.com.

TAA Members Present at VATAT

One goal for TAA is to reach out and include the youth in and through our programs. Last January, at our 41st Annual Conference & Trade Show, we organized and developed a program especially for high school aquaculture teachers. But, due to travel, budget restrictions, and testing schedule conflicts, the program was not successful.

However, we did not give up, because the need is still unmet, Brian Brawner of R & B Aquatic Distribution, Inc. and Robert Schmid from TPWD created an opportunity to make the presentation at the annual Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas (VATAT) Professional Development Conference in Arlington, TX at the end of July. The three hour presentation covered the follow topics; "Introduction to Aquaculture", "Species Possibilities", "System Designs and Considerations", and an Aquaculture Resource Guide, which many of you graciously volunteered to be a part of. The resource guide provided information about reference materials for

aquaculture, companies that provided aquaculture supplies and services, the TAA Availability List and a list of TAA members that volunteered to provide advice, assistance, tours, and lectures upon request. A total of 17 teachers attended the presentation; some already having aquaculture facilities and programs in their schools, other interested in learning more about the possibilities. Be warned, there are some enthusiastic teachers out there wanting to bring aquaculture to their students. You may be getting a call. Please lend them your support. The more students know about aquaculture, the more they will talk about it with their friends and family. The more they talk about Texas aquaculture, the more likely they will be to look for, seek out, prefer, even demand, Texas farm raised products when they purchase seafood.



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The 4 P's of a Safe and Sustainable Aquaculture Industry Comes to Texas

August 10, 2011

It was a couple years in coming, but finally, "The 4 P's of a Safe and Sustainable Aquaculture Industry" made it to Texas! Texas State University (thanks to Joe Tomasso) co-sponsored the event with TAA, providing the meeting room on the San Marcos campus and providing doughnuts and coffee during the morning. The National Aquaculture Association (NAA) and the United Soybean Board (USB) sponsored and presented the workshop. Andy Goodwin and Nathan Stone of U. of Arkansas, Pine Bluff and Linda O'Diemo of the NAA made the presentations. Texas'

own, Delbert Gatlin from TAMU also gave a presentation from the Texas perspective, "The 4 D's of Texas Aquaculture". There were 36 people present for the workshop. A number of folks had last minute circumstances come up and were unable to attend. Those that paid for the workshop will receive the 4P's "tool kit" in the mail shortly. As always, Donna and Cindy did a fantastic job taking care of the details surrounding the event; lunch, cold drinks, parking permits. Overall; a good time was had by all, educational, enjoyable, and entertaining.



Del Gatlin presenting the 4 D's of Texas Aquaculture during the 4 P's workshop.

Dr. Robert R. Stickney Retires August 31, 2011

By Granvil Treece

Dr. Robert R. Stickney has been director of the Texas Sea Grant College Program since January 1996. He received his B.S. in Zoology at the University of Nebraska, M.A. in Zoology at the University of Missouri and Ph.D. in Biological Oceanography at Florida State University. His career has largely focused on aquaculture and he has worked in more than 20 countries.

He began his career at the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography in 1971 and joined the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University in College Station in 1976. I took Bob's graduate mariculture course in 1983 at TAMU, with many others whom have remained in the industry (Mike Masser, George Chamberlain, Joe Fox, and others). Jim Ekstrom studied under Bob in the 1970s. Dr. Stickney became Director of the Fisheries Research Laboratory and Professor of Zoology at Southern Illinois University in 1984. He was named Professor and Director of the School of Fisheries at the University of Washington in 1985. Bob remained in Seattle until joining Texas Sea Grant. He worked hard and for many years with the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council to establish their stand-alone fisheries management plan, which included the establishment of the framework and regulation to allow the offshore aquaculture industry to develop as a viable and sustainable industry in the USA.

Dr. Stickney has written more than 100 refereed journal and encyclopedia articles and is the author of several books and book chapters. I had the opportunity to contribute to his "Encyclopedia of Aquaculture", his "Responsible Marine Aquaculture" book and more recently he invited me to work with him writing a chapter in a book on the history of aquaculture, edited by Jim Tidwell. Bob Stickney is currently the editor-in-chief of *World Aquaculture* magazine and the scientific journal *Reviews in Fisheries Science*. He is past-president of the World Aquaculture Society, the Fish Culture and Education

Sections of the American Fisheries Society, and the Sea Grant Association.

Following a nationwide search, the College of Geosciences at Texas A&M University in College Station has selected Dr. Pam Plotkin from Cornell University as the eighth director in the 40-year history of the Texas Sea Grant College Program. She replaces Dr. Stickney, who will retire the end of this month.

Dr. Plotkin takes over the organization as it celebrates its 40th anniversary, a milestone recently honored by a resolution passed by 82nd session of the Texas Legislature. She follows Texas Sea Grant's longest-tenured director, who raised the program's reputation and increased its impacts nationally and within Texas. Through Stickney's efforts, Texas Sea Grant gained a seat on the Coastal Coordination Council, which administers the state's Coastal Management Program. He also revamped the process through which Texas Sea Grant awards research grants to ensure that the competition is fair and that the best proposals receive funding. His system was recognized as one of the best in the nation and has become the model for several other state Sea Grant Programs. In October 2010, Stickney received a national award for his contributions to the Sea Grant network.

The Texas Sea Grant College Program is a partnership of university, government and industry focusing on marine research, education and outreach. Texas Sea Grant is dedicated to the understanding, wise use and stewardship of the state's coastal and marine resources. It is part of a network of 32 university-based programs in coastal and Great Lakes states that operate as a partnership between the state governments and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Texas Sea Grant is located at Texas A&M University and is part of the College of Geosciences. Texas Sea Grant focuses on three primary, interconnected activities: research, outreach and education.

Texas Sea Grant awards about \$800,000 annually in grants to the best marine researchers at accredited colleges and universities in the state. Its outreach component comprises the extension service, which boasts six county marine resource or coastal community development agents and six specialists in marine-related fields, and the Marine Information Service, which is Texas Sea Grant's communications arm.

Texas Sea Grant, the Texas Aquaculture Industry and I will sincerely miss Bob Stickney and wish him all the best in his retirement, where he plans to continue to write and raise cattle at his farm and ranch in Robertson County.



Photo by Ron Malone of Bob Stickney with a trophy bass caught last November at the Sammy Ray Sustainable Aquaculture Center Workshop held at Cook's Branch Conservancy, Montgomery, Texas.



Farmer; From Every Walk of Life

Story told by Granvil Treece

Granvil Treece was traveling a few weeks ago in Florida and Alabama assisting USDA with the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program to help farmers. During his travels he met a fellow (Bryan Compton) who appeared to be just another everyday Alabama catfish and shrimp farmer from Demopolis. One would never have known he was a famous US war hero, if another farmer (David Teichert-Coddington) had not told him about Mr. Compton. Mr. Compton is 82, but he looks like he is 60. According to David TC, Mr. Compton was Senator McCain's squadron leader when

McCain was shot down and captured in Viet Nam. Mr. Compton retired as a Rear Admiral and now has 400 acres of catfish and several shrimp ponds. His farm, as was David TC's, were hit by one of the many tornadoes that went through Alabama back in April, and caused extensive damage. Below is a link that tells of Mr. Compton's actions leading to his being awarded the Navy Cross. There are other links with more information on the Internet if interested. Farmers never cease to amaze.

<http://www.militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/recipient.php?recipientid=4141>

NOAA Announces Federal Marine Aquaculture Policy for US

From: Aquaculture North America
Volume 2, Issue #4 July/August 2011
By: Erich Luening, Summary by: Robert Schmid

After reading this article a number of times, attempting to digest the information and come to a concise conclusion, it can be best summed up as follows. Even though the government decided by in 1980 that aquaculture was a good thing (quote from Texas' own Joe Hendrix) and even though it has been determined that NOAA has the authority it needs to proceed in with the implementation of a comprehensive aquaculture plan, there appears to be some foot dragging among the parties involved (some say it's environmentalist NGO lobbying pressure, others say it's environmentalist with

NOAA) and nothing appears to be happening very fast. The Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council (Joe Hendrix just resigned from) worked long and hard to develop a Fisheries Management Proposal as a model for how to initiate and streamline the application process for aquaculture operations in federal water. Michael Rubino (manager of NOAA's Aquaculture Program) is optimistic that the first permits could be in place in the Gulf within a year. Keep your eye on these developments. It's possible these offshore activities could significantly alter Texas aquaculture.



'MarketMaker' Coming To Texas for Texas Producers To Use Free of Charge

By Granvil Treece

MarketMaker is a large, in-depth market-matching program. It is web-based, and anyone can use it and search for items or services they want. It is coming to Texas and it will be available to Texas aquaculture producers at no charge, thanks to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service at TAMU picking up the start-up and monthly fees. It does not yet include Texas, but will soon, according to Mark Waller at TAE in College Station. To see how it works:

1. Open the web link <http://www.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/>
2. In the second square on the left-hand side of the home page under "Select a State", use the pull-down menu and select South Carolina.
3. You will see a couple of examples ... the business spotlight highlights a seafood

entity called Livingston's Bulls Bay Seafood. If you click the "learn more" link, that highlights the firm, what it sells, hours of operation, location (via a map), etc.

TAA members may recall that there was a presentation on MarketMaker at the 2011 TAA conference in Bay City. It sounds like a great nation-wide marketing program to assist producers in finding or marketing products. Many thanks to Rob Schmid for lining this presentation up and to the producers of MarketMaker for bringing it to Texas.

Background on MarketMaker and Who Can Benefit

BACKGROUND: MarketMaker was created in 2004 by a team from University of Illinois Extension. Since then it has grown to include

17 states. MarketMaker is a free online resource linking consumers, producers/farmers and businesses throughout the food chain. It boasts one of the largest collections of searchable food industry-related data bases in the country -- categorized by buyers, sellers, location and other demographic information with GIS mapping capability allowing easy location of nearby food sources.

Even though the food sector in the United States is moving towards consolidation, which implies bigger producers and bigger store outlets, producers' direct marketing alternatives are also growing in importance. Three of the main factors affecting the increase in importance of direct marketing are: (a) growing consumer interest in local foods, (b) increasing, low price competition in commoditized markets, and (c) the difficult financial/profit situation of producers which compels them to look for alternate avenues to market their products. While the local foods concept may be desirable to consumers and producers for numerous reasons, it creates a need for buyers to find those local/regional producers and coordinate local production/marketing schedules with other supplies to assure consumer demands are satisfied. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. recently announced that during the last two years the number of growers from which it purchases locally and regionally grown fresh produce increased by 50%. Such "buy local" programs could result in reduced prices for shoppers due

to reduced shipping costs and a smaller environmental footprint, while increasing support to local economies.

FOR WHOM: Producers and related businesses that are looking to get involved or expand into direct marketing, local foods, etc., and consumers and businesses that are looking to increase their ability to source products that may be difficult to find.

Texas AgriLife Extension Service/Sea Grant faculty and staff will coordinate with University of Illinois Extension Specialists to educate Texas seafood and other agriculture industry participants through workshops, publications, and other outreach efforts on the advantages and value of participating through the Texas MarketMaker website. Texas AgriLife Extension Service/Sea Grant faculty and staff will work with industry participants to register, set up user accounts, and get business data entered into participant profiles. The training effort will start in the Gulf Coast region and concentrate on the seafood industry, including aquaculture, as well as nature tourism, sport fishing and other products that can be marketed on-line.

If you have any further questions about the program contact Mark Waller, Prof. and Exten. Specialist, Agriculture Economics Dept., TAMU, College Station. Tel. (979) 845-1751 and email mwaller@tamu.edu.

Toyota Texas Bass Classic

Copied from: <http://toyotatexasbassclassic.com/100-000>

Do you want to spend your days fishing like a pro for **\$100,000**? Why wouldn't you? The Toyota Texas Bass Classic is proud to introduce the first ever **ShareLunker Club Tournament (SCT)**. This unique tournament allows anglers of all skill levels to compete like a pro: for **Big Fish** and **Big Money**! What better way to support the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, than to go fishing...and get paid for it! To participate in the tournament for a chance to win, interested anglers need to **(1) register** and become an SCT member; and **(2) fish beautiful Lake Conroe from October 1st – 21st 2011** (the "Tournament Period"). The SCT member that catches the largest Toyota ShareLunker (largemouth bass over 13.00 pounds) during the Tournament Period will win a **cash prize of \$100,000!** Go to the website for details on how to register, and for the rules of the tournament. <http://toyotatexasbassclassic.com/100-000> Good Luck!



Man Bites Fish, America Saved

By: JIM HUTCHINSON

While doom and gloom makes for great sound bites at rip and read newsrooms across the country, it doesn't accurately assess the true state of our U.S. fish stocks. Americans today are manipulated into accepting farm-raised foreign species while our nation continues to import species like Chilean Sea Bass which have been mostly decimated by foreign fleets.

In mid July, NOAA Fisheries issued a report about the [status of U.S. fisheries](#) showing that American fishermen have been fishing on vastly improved stocks in recent years. According to the report, a full 84% of U.S. fish stocks are not subject to overfishing with the latest assessments noting that "the majority of our nation's fisheries are at sustainable levels and management measures continue to be implemented to prevent overfishing and rebuild overfished stocks."

That's a glass half full.

The NOAA report also prompted quick response from the environmental business community, who successfully had formulated their own analysis of the status of fish stocks prepared for national press coverage in advance of the official government report.

Theirs is the glass half empty.

The sad fact for fishing communities nationwide is that it's much easier for preservationists to sell their stories to the national publications when using headlines like SEA IS DYING, FISH GOING EXTINCT, WORLD TO END & CHILDREN WILL STARVE. News editors love these kinds of leads because they're intriguing, startling and in the end they sell papers. It's the old journalism adage that 'Dog Bites Man' is just not as appealing above the fold as 'Man Bites Dog.'

While doom and gloom makes for great sound bites at rip and read newsrooms across the country, it doesn't accurately assess the true state of our U.S. fish stocks. Americans today are being given the treatment - 'guilt' treatment to be more specific, being manipulated into accepting the concept of farm-raised foreign species while our nation continues to import species like Chilean Sea Bass which have been mostly decimated by foreign fleets paying no adherence to international catch requirements. While more and more of our seafood harvest is essentially being outsourced to other

countries, the American media continues to hammer away at the concept that our coastal fishermen are emptying out our oceans.

Sadly, while corporations like Wal-Mart continue to invest in a cap and trade system of coastal sharecropping known as catch shares and individual fishing quotas, their own customers are being led to believe that fishing is bad. Rather than embracing the notion that any coastal resident can simply head down to the bay or ocean with rod and reel to put food on the family dinner table at night, the radical environmental community and their headline writing propagandists have led mainstream America into believing that fishing is a sin.

Local media outlets will occasionally rip these headlines from the national newswire to pass along to their own readers, as recently occurred when the Connecticut Post reconstituted preservationist rhetoric plastered on the pages at Time Magazine, wondering aloud if "fish farming can fill the void created by what many environmental scientists see as the approaching decimation of saltwater wild fish stocks due to overfishing." The Connecticut Post went on preach about being a "responsible recreational angler" while promoting a future of "catch and release fishing."

Had the local editors in Connecticut done some actual research in their own back yard however, they would've learned that some of the more popular local fish species are actually experiencing more healthy success in terms of stock rebuilding than in just about anywhere else in the world.

Vitaly important to both the recreational and commercial sector alike are black sea bass and scup (porgy), considered healthy, rebuilt species. Summer flounder or fluke, which is currently at a higher recorded biomass than at any other time in the past 30 years of fisheries management history is not overfished, and no overfishing is occurring. In fact, this ever-popular recreational fish stock is currently at 89% of the 132-million-pound biomass goal, on target to be officially considered a rebuilt stock by the 2013 federal deadline.

By relying on the preservationist spin, the Connecticut Post was also fooled into erroneously reporting that "90 percent of large species of fish, like tuna and swordfish, have been all but fished out." However, according to the latest data from

NOAA Fisheries, the North Atlantic swordfish population is now considered fully rebuilt, with biomass estimates currently 5 percent above the target level. It's important to remember that 10 to 15 years ago, at about the time that many American chefs began a 'just say no to swordfish' campaign, there were nearly 1,000 longline permits in the United States, whereas today there are only about 114. The stock is healthy and for good reason.

And despite what the Connecticut Post would have readers believe, the same can be said for many of our local tunas.

Atlantic yellowfin tuna are believed to be near target population levels and is harvested at a sustainable rate; overfishing is not occurring and the stock is not considered overfished. Last assessed in 2007, the Atlantic bigeye stock had declined rapidly in the 1990s, but it stabilized at or below sustainable levels in response to a large reduction in overall harvest. Bigeye, a popular target for the sushi set, had a biomass in 2006 that was said to be 92 percent of the overall target level for consideration of being classified as rebuilt. While it's not a success yet, it's neither plummeting as the preservationist research groups would claim.

Bluefin tuna, of course, have been a huge story, made bigger by the traditional first fish of the season in Japan which sells for \$500,000 or more for that one fish. The preservationists love to use that symbolic first tuna as a call to arms, but in actuality, the Western Atlantic bluefin tuna stock is showing two distinct scenarios after the latest 2008 ICCAT assessments, both low and high recruitment. The low recruitment scenario says population estimate is 57 percent of the target level for spawning stock biomass, while high recruitment estimate is less optimistic at only 14 percent. International overfishing is occurring, but the U.S. is responsible for only about 3 percent of global harvest.

Are the fish all going extinct? Real science does not indicate there's any truth to the doomsday claims, yet more and more journalists are buying into the reactionary, agenda-driven rhetoric spewed forth by national academia, all but ignoring the on-water observations of local fishermen and regional assessment experts. Such conservation guilt has seeped into the very fabric of the recreational fishing community, as preservationists who wish to divide our sectors into 'haves' and 'have nots' have found easy marks preaching amongst the catch and release converts. For those who would never

bring home a fish for a dinner, it's easy to point a finger at those who choose to keep enough for the table.

The deep-rooted problem today of course is that showroom environmentalists wish to dictate what goes on our table and to what degree, and they've have found all-to-willing accomplices in newsrooms decimated by budget cuts and attrition, with many task saturated editors virtually unable to substantiate the validity of any news leads.

By tapping the vein of American guilt, preservationists have attempted to bleed out our ability to fight with conviction on behalf of a nation's right to fish. Should those with the most to lose ever unite in efforts to oppose those who wish to reduce fishing participation amongst both commercial and recreational fishermen, perhaps then news reporters of this country would really have something to write about.

About the Author: Jim Hutchinson, Jr. is Managing Director of the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA), a national, grassroots political action organization that represents recreational fishermen and the recreational fishing industry on marine fisheries issues.



Palacios Area Aquaculture Operation and Owner Convicted For Killing Protected Species

VICTORIA, Texas – “Following one and one-half days of trial testimony and approximately three and one-half hours of deliberation, a federal jury has returned its verdict finding a Palacios, Texas area aquaculture operation and its owner, guilty of illegally killing approximately 90 brown pelicans, and a number of other bird species, which are protected under federal law”. “The owner faces a fine of not more than \$15,000 or a maximum six-month prison term or both. The aquaculture operation also faces a similar fine”.

The above paragraph was received anonymously by the TAA office in mid-August, and there was far more information provided in the story than is printed here. Names were named and a list of violations read out! But, the point to be made here is this; even though one cannot get a permit to shoot pelicans, there are “proper channels” to go through to seek relief from animals that can damage or do damage your aquaculture crops. You can contact Texas Animal Damage Control in College Station at (979) 845-6201 and make a request for permits to “take protected animals” causing damage to your crops. TX ADC will

make a site visit to assess the damage and/or potential damage. You will need to fill out some applications and answer some questions. Then, typically, within a month or so, you will have permits in hand (usually annual, renewable permits) from the US Fish and Wildlife Service/Migratory Bird Permitting Office, Albuquerque, NM (505) 248-7882 that will allow you to use lethal and non-lethal means to protect your crop. There are of course, limits to how many and what kind of bird you can take, who can take them and by what means. But, taking the legal route will certainly be a more pleasant experience and less costly than the approach taken by the folks in the headlines above.

Also, this is a point made in the 4 P’s of a Safe and Sustainable Aquaculture Industry workshop. One “bad story” in the press about an aquaculture operation going around killing protected species, paints every aquaculture operation with the accusation of wrong doing. Play it safe, play it smart, operate within the law. As Del Gatlin’s “4D’s of Texas Aquaculture” stated, we are “duly regulated”.

Organic Pond Announces Organic Certification for PureBacteria Plus

Sterling Heights, Michigan, (August 17, 2011) Organic Pond is pleased to announce that the Organic Materials Research Institute (OMRI) has reviewed the companies PureBacteria+ Biological Pond Muck Reducer and approved the listing of PureBacteria Plus for use in organic production.

“PureBacteria+ is a fast acting, natural, organic pond cleaner that balances the nutrient load in a pond by digesting decaying organic matter such as fish waste, decaying algae and weeds, said Pete Kennedy, CEO of Organic Pond. “In organic agriculture growers frequently use ponds for irrigation. Traditionally, aquatic algaecides and herbicides have been used to

control algae and weeds that often clog irrigation pumps. We introduced PureBacteria + to address the nutrient load feeding algae and weed growth and provide the grower an organic alternative to chemical treatments” said Kennedy.

Aquaculture or fish farming is another key market for PureBacteria+. With high-fish population per acre of water, fish waste is a significant problem for most growers. PureBacteria+ naturally consumes the fish waste resulting in cleaner, clearer water.

Residential and farm ponds can also benefit from using microbial based products. “Our

business began serving the residential and farm pond market with our ABC approach to pond health designed to reduce the use of chemical treatments. We found that Aeration, Bacteria and Colorant naturally balances the pond ecosystem by eliminating stagnation and nutrient accumulation and the overall biomass of algae and weed production”, said Kennedy.

Organic Pond products can be found at feed & grain stores or online at <http://www.organicpond.com>.

About Organic Pond, LLC

OrganicPond.com, LLC is part of a group of companies that provide products and services

designed to reduce the use of chemicals and promote the use of renewable resources and environmental conservation. One of the fastest-growing pond treatment companies last year, Organic Pond is seeking distributors, dealers, affiliates and investors to continue their rapid growth.

Contact: Jeff Kennedy, Organic Pond LLC, 13854 Lakeside Circle, Sterling Heights, MI 48313. Phone 888-986-9995. jeffkennedy@organicpond.com

Visit our website: <http://www.OrganicPond.com>
Visit our blog: <http://info.organicpond.com/blog>

Seviche de Port Aransas

From Joan Holt

1 lb kingfish, or any other kind of fish or shellfish
3/4 cup fresh lime juice
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 chili verde or fresh jalapeno chopped fine
2 medium tomatoes chopped fine
1/4 cup olive oil (do not substitute)
1 tsp black pepper, 1/2 tsp oregano, 2 tbs white wine vinegar
(I sometimes add black olives chopped finely and/or grated carrots)

Bone fish, shred and put in china or plastic dish, pour lime juice over fish, mix well and cover tightly; let mixture stand for at least 1 hour or overnight in refrigerator. Drain fish, wash in cold water in a colander and drain well. Mix remaining ingredients tightly, cover and refrigerate 1- 12 hours (the longer the better).



Shrimp or Crawfish Etouffee

From Donna Hanson

3/4 cups butter
2 or 3 medium onions
1 green pepper
4 ribs celery
1/2 can Ro-Tel tomatoes (or more)

Sauté 1st 6 ingredients for about 4 hours, covered.

Add:

Juice of 1/2 lemon
Dash of Worcestershire sauce
Parsley

Then add:

2 buttons garlic
1 can mushroom soup
3 pounds peeled shrimp or crawfish

No water added at all. A little sherry or white wine is good though. Serve over rice

2011-12 Calendar

September 28- Oct 4, 2011	26 th Annual Texas Shrimp & Marine Finfish Culture Course Port Aransas, TX
October 24-26, 2011	Texas Aquatic Plant Management Society Conference Mayan Ranch, Bandera, TX
January 25-27, 2012	Texas Aquaculture Association Annual Conference & Trade Show Bay City, TX <i>Updates can be found on our website: www.texasaquaculture.org</i>

