

Dec. 8, 1941 - for publication in
"Official Year Book of the New England Fishing
Industry" - sent to Mr. Cooley 12/ /41

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THE SEA SCALLOP FISHERY

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Prior to the year 1937 the landing of a scallop dragger direct from the fishing grounds was a rarity at the Port of Boston. Beginning with 1937 there has been a constant trend upwards in the number of individual landings and total poundage. This is illustrated in the accompanying table.

This table illustrates a jump from a little over 8,000 pounds in 1937 to just under 2,000,000 pounds in 1939. During the first 8 months of the current year, 1,062,367 pounds were landed, and another 283,400 pounds were hauled during September and October. In spite of the fact that the direct supply of this shell fish has increased, the price trend has been steadily upward with an average of 11.3¢ a pound in 1938 to 16.32¢ in 1940. If the present trend in 1941 continues, it is estimated that the price will average nearly 20¢ a pound.

The sea scallop (Pecten magellanicus) is reported to be common in North Atlantic waters from Cape Hatteras to Labrador. They have been taken in depths up to 100 fathoms, but usually are taken by the draggers in depths between 20 and 45 fathoms. Although scattered all over the banks of the North Atlantic, commercial fishing is confined usually to spots well known to the fishermen. These grounds are situated from 25 - 50 miles NE. to ENE. Nantucket Lightship and 160 - 220 miles ESE. of Boston Lightship.

The fishing season extends through the entire year but the catches are seriously curtailed during the winter months. To operate successfully a scallop dragger needs fairly calm weather due to the fact that heavy swells lift the drag off the bottom and out of the range of the scallops which are on the ocean floor. In addition, the typical offshore scallop boat will average only 65 feet in length and is not big enough to risk the hazardous winter storms. Therefore, the best months in regard to quantities landed are May through November.

The scallop is harvested by means of a drag consisting of a rigid triangular shaped pair of arms attached to a rectangular frame 9 - 12 feet long and 12 - 15 inches high. This rigid frame forms the opening to the net proper which is 5 feet deep and consists of a top section made of sash cord meshes and a bottom section made up of a row of ten 3-inch iron rings joined by 1-inch iron links. These rather heavy pieces of fishing equipment are used in pairs, one being fished on each side simultaneously. The towing time generally is 15 - 45 minutes depending on the type of bottom and abundance of scallops.

The average offshore scallop dragger carries 8 or 10 men and works on a 6-hour-on and 3-hour-off schedule. These hours are long but are a big improvement over conditions of a few years back when the crew often worked the clock around. The share system is favorable to the crew and the share per trip is high but the annual average is cut down considerably by curtailment of fishing during the winter months.

Quantity and value of sea scallop landings

Year	New England States		Boston		Number of trips	Average price per pound
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value		
1935	Pounds 1,670,000	\$231,000			...	...
1937	5,659,000	629,387	<u>1/</u> 8,752	\$ 1,147	...	...
1938	5,850,500	622,001	<u>1/</u> 828,886	94,143	...	11.30¢
1939	7,177,900	981,331	1,782,383	232,509	140	13.03
1940	...	...	1,140,565	186,107	100	16.32
1941	...	...	<u>2/</u> 1,012,636	187,850	88	18.60

1/ Boston, Gloucester, and Portland.
2/ Figures through August.

SOME STATISTICS
on the 1/
SEA SCALLOP FISHERY

In response to a number of inquiries regarding the present status of the New England Sea Scallop Fishery, available data concerning this fishery have been tabulated and summarized.

Fairly complete records of landings in Middle Atlantic and North Atlantic States extend back to 1929 and there are sporadic records for years back to 1889. These are tabulated in Table 1 by states.

The importance of New Bedford as the principal sea scallop port in recent years is shown by Table 2 in which the landings at that port are compared with the landings for the entire Atlantic coast for the years 1938 to 1950.

In Figure 1 are outlined the principal grounds which are now fished for sea scallops. The variation in production of these various grounds from 1944 to 1950 is presented in Table 3.

An indication of the intensity of fishing is shown by Table 4 in which the number of trips made is tabulated for the years 1944-1950. This table also gives an expression of the relative abundance (catch per boat per day) of scallops on all banks as a whole for that period.

Table 5 presents relative abundance data (catch per day) for the various areas fished during the 1944-1950 period.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has no records of areas fished for scallops previous to the year 1944 and the data for years subsequent to 1950 have not yet been processed.

1/ Prepared by the North Atlantic Fishery Investigations, Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Woods Hole Station, Woods Hole, Massachusetts, May 1952.

TABLE 1.—Landings of sea scallops by state and region, 1889-1950. (In pounds).

Year	Maine	Mass.	Rhode Island	Conn.	Total			New Jersey	Total Chesapeake 1/	Total Atlantic States
					New England	New York	Middle Atlantic			
1889	295,299	28,550	-	-	323,849	*	*	*	*	
1898	166,509	198,440	-	-	364,949	*	*	*	*	
1902	114,656	19,200	-	-	133,856	*	*	*	*	
1905	415,600	15,005	-	-	430,605	*	*	*	*	
1919	72,512	42,300	-	-	114,812	*	*	*	*	
1924	200,514	138,600	-	-	339,114	*	*	*	*	
1926	*	*	*	*	1,067,964	*	47,436	*	*	
1928	326,178	119,124	29,970	-	475,272	*	*	*	*	
1929	358,570	445,280	-	-	824,850	*	56,700	*	*	
1930	436,416	510,738	-	-	947,154	*	*	*	*	
1931	586,870	493,663	-	423	1,080,956	*	154,364	*	*	
1932	607,780	869,634	-	94,527	1,571,941	*	240,234	*	*	
1933	1,073,172	1,029,097	-	55,926	2,158,195	*	373,589	*	*	
1934	*	*	*	*	1,670,100	*	426,600	*	*	
1935	743,200	924,300	2,600	-	1,670,100	*	*	*	*	
1936	*	*	*	*	5,659,000	*	234,100	*	*	
1937	679,400	4,976,900	2,700	-	5,659,000	*	114,000	*	*	
1938	792,900	5,057,200	400	-	5,850,500	*	20,100	*	*	
1939	593,500	6,584,400	-	-	7,177,900	*	67,500	*	*	
1940	199,100	5,191,700	100	-	5,390,900	**	**	**	**	
1941	**	**	**	**	6,164,400	**	56,400	**	**	
1942	132,100	6,007,200	100	25,000	6,164,400	**	300	**	**	
1943	232,700	4,609,500	-	-	4,842,200	**	100	**	**	
1944	77,800	4,158,700	26,500	-	4,263,000	**	68,500	**	**	
1945	71,400	3,920,200	-	2,600	3,994,200	**	6,800	**	**	
1946	136,800	9,438,300	-	3,000	9,578,100	**	173,800	**	**	
1947	507,100	12,524,600	1,600	6,000	13,039,300	**	835,100	**	**	
1948	453,686	11,638,057	-	-	12,091,743	**	428,872	**	**	
1949	508,916	13,178,905	-	-	13,687,821	**	693,123	**	**	
1950	524,824	13,186,177	17,000	-	13,728,001	**	4,738,560	**	**	
1933								72,645	*	
1934									*	
1935									*	
1936									*	
1937									*	
1938									*	
1939									*	
1940									*	
1941									*	
1942									*	
1943									*	
1944									*	
1945									*	
1946									*	
1947									*	
1948									*	
1949									*	
1950									*	

1/ Virginia and Maryland

* No data available

** No breakdown by state or region

Table 2 : Comparison of landings of sea scallops at
New Bedford, Mass. with total landings
Atlantic Coast States, 1938-1950
(Thousands of Pounds)

Year	New Bedford	Atlantic Coast	Percent Landed at New Bedford
1938	4,255	8,909	47.8
1939	4,733	9,789	48.4
1940	4,414	7,643	57.8
1941	5,579	7,865	70.9
1942	5,446	7,183	75.8
1943	3,832	5,529	69.3
1944	4,009	4,869	82.3
1945	3,897	5,711	68.3
1946	8,940	11,613	77.0
1947	10,675	14,654	72.8
1948	10,082	16,245	62.1
1949	11,707	16,639	70.4
1950	11,982	18,467	63.9

TABLE 3.--Production of sea scallops by fishing area as landed at New Bedford, Mass., 1944-50.

Fishing Area	1944		1945		1946		1947		1948		1949		1950	
	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	Percent
Stellwagen or Middle Bank (XXII-E)	40,088	1.0	--	0.0	43,700	0.5	85,400	0.8	50,246	0.3	81,950	0.4	205,697	1.7
W. Side So. Channel #10 Buoy, $\frac{1}{2}$ Moon Shl. & Sm. Channel (XIII-G)	240,529	6.0	531,250	8.5	563,221	6.3	1,366,414	12.8	1,492,107	14.8	2,411,676	20.6	2,048,956	17.1
Cultivator Locals (XXII-H)	400,881	10.0	701,430	18.0	992,342	11.1	1,195,612	11.2	1,41,145	1.4	466,286	4.0	59,910	0.5
Northern Edge (XXII-J)	2,325,111	58.0	1,987,385	51.0	4,085,588	45.7	7,525,550	70.5	3,770,595	37.4	4,237,994	36.2	2,180,766	18.2
Southeast Georges (XXII-M)	400,881	10.0	136,590	3.5	143,040	1.6	66,076	0.6	2,275,488	22.6	162,193	1.3	2,024,989	16.9
Southwest Georges (XXII-N)	120,535	3.0	116,505	2.0	2,369,104	26.5	--	0.0	90,736	0.9	466,287	4.0	2,743,820	22.9
Nantucket Shoals (XXII-O)	481,057	12.0	545,357	14.0	742,021	8.3	394,979	3.7	2,066,934	20.7	3,816,536	32.6	2,552,205	21.3
Off Fire Island Inlet (SE of Ambrose Lt.) (XXIII)	--	0.0	77,936	2.0	--	0.0	10,675	0.1	151,954	1.9	70,243	0.6	167,781	1.4
Total all areas	4,008,812	100.0	3,896,853	100.0	8,940,016	100.0	10,675,106	100.0	10,081,805	100.0	11,707,165	100.0	11,982,165	100.0

Table 4 : Number of trips and catch per day for New Bedford sea scallop fleet, 1944-1950.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Trips</u>	<u>Catch per boat per day (in pounds)</u>
1944	325	1,807
1945	296	1,638
1946	766	1,790
1947	1,435	1,669
1948	1,404	1,320
1949	1,494	1,389
1950	1,393	1,646

Table 5 : Catch per day of Sea Scallops by area
1944-1950
(in pounds)

Year	XXII							XXIII
	E	O	G	H	J	M	N	
	Eastern Mass.	Nan. Shoals & Lightship Grounds	W. Side South Channel	E. Side South Channel	Northern Edge & N.E. Peak	Central & S.E. Georges	Southwest Georges	Off Long Island
1944	1,022	1,596	1,768	1,609	1,886	1,842	2,054	---
1945	---	1,456	1,670	1,624	1,698	1,727	1,633	1,080
1946	1,102	1,505	1,365	1,677	1,870	1,782	1,990	---
1947	945	1,794	1,436	1,642	1,734	1,626	---	450
1948	906	1,389	1,229	1,336	1,307	1,392	1,260	1,035
1949	1,021	1,456	1,350	1,525	1,364	1,411	1,323	1,026
1950	1,286	1,806	1,456	1,463	1,606	1,658	1,766	1,319

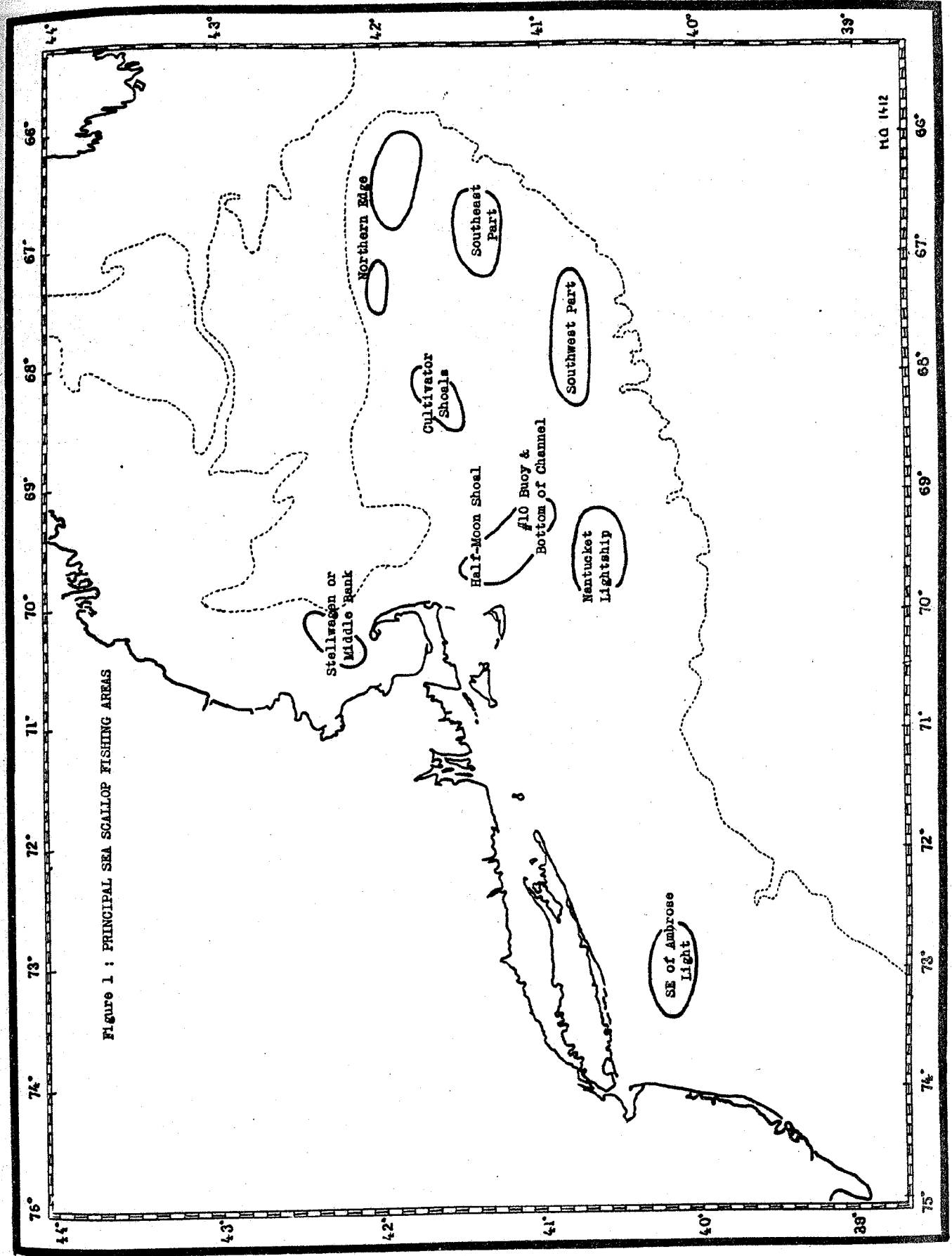


Figure 1 : PRINCIPAL SEA SCALLOP FISHING AREAS