

"Salt-Walkers"; Summing Up '73

• Ever since I first heard of them, *Halobates*, those widespread creatures of the air-sea interface, have intrigued me. How wingless insects about half an inch long can survive among—possibly thrive upon—the vicissitudes of the open sea is very curious.

Thus I was pleased to receive Lanna Cheng's paper on *Halobates* (the word, by the way, is a combination of the Greek words "hal," meaning salt, and "bates," walker). The photographs, particularly the extraordinary one that appears on the cover, were an unexpected plus—lagniappe, as they say in Louisiana.

Lanna Cheng is on the staff of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. I worked at Scripps for several years. Looking back, it seems to me that scarcely a day passed that I did not learn something new and interesting about the ocean and its creatures. I hope that this article from Scripps awakens in you some of that same sense of wonder. It did to me.

• As these notes are being written, we are sending the December (index) number of *Marine Fisheries Review* to the printer. I am speculating, as I always do at this time, which of the seven signed articles is likely to elicit the widest response. Will it be all—or one—of the three on kamaboko? Or the new comparative studies on the chemical and nutritive values of several commonly eaten finfish and shellfish? Or the paper on squids? With the appearance of the December number, we shall have printed 67 signed articles in 1973. Some aroused more interest than I had foreseen (some aroused less, too). It was easy to predict that the "shrimp number" (March-April) might be widely read, but I did not expect all the copies to disappear in a matter of days, which they did. Nor had I anticipated the number of

requests for it that we received from abroad. In the May-June number, Tsuyoshi Kawasaki's article on skipjack tuna resources kicked up immediate interest, as did Bill Folsom's brief account of the Japanese eel fishery. Ralph Hile's classic paper on the structure and senses of fishes was in predictable demand.

In July, Erwin Penn's article on the price spread of fish products among producers and distributors spurred interest. The paper on "beefish" patties by Fred King and George Flick has been referred to many times in the trade and popular press. Louis Ronsivalli tells me that the paper on the slide rule for predicting the shelf life of cod brought requests not only for the paper but also for the slide rule. (I understand that as a result of the publication of the paper, the slide rule is now being produced in plastic, for practical use.) August brought the paper by Fred Bell and Richard Fullenbaum on the American lobster fishery; there was much interest in that, as there should have been. Processors were eager to obtain copies of Fred King's report on improving minced blocks for the fish stick trade. In September, Joe Pileggi's "Fuel shortages and the fisherman" was found useful and painfully timely.

October's three papers on Pacific salmon for New England fisheries were apparently widely read, as was the account of the alteration of the estuaries of south Florida by William N. Lindall, Jr. The November number was hardly off the press before we received calls concerning the paper on the San Francisco Bay Area herring by Maxwell B. Eldridge and W. Michael Kaill. John Dassow and Maynard Steinberg's paper on aquaculture appears to have been widely read.

To list these papers is not to single them out as "best of the year" or to

imply that the other articles we published were not equally worthwhile. But these papers (none of them "popularized" in an effort to spark wider interest, by the way) for various reasons appear to have reached a wider readership than others. Looking through them, I am struck by the fact that they range from economics to basic biology to technology to marketing. That they covered so wide a spectrum indicates the breadth of interest of the fisheries community, I suspect.

• What promises to be an interesting conference is coming up in March. From the 20th to the 22nd, in Houston's Astroworld Hotel, the Texas Coastal and Marine Council, Texas A&M University's Center for Marine Resources, and the National Marine Fisheries Service will sponsor the first international conference to explore artificial reef construction and its use.

Informal panel discussions, designed to provide for maximum sharing of information, opinions, and ideas, will focus on artificial reefs around the world; scientific aspects; materials and methods of construction; and physiological, economic, and legal considerations. Exhibits, including models, films, and the like, will be on display during the meeting.

A telling example of what an artificial reef can mean economically to a nearby community was given by Chester C. Buchanan in his paper, "Effects of an artificial habitat on the marine sport fishery and economy of Murrells Inlet, South Carolina," which appeared in the September number of *Marine Fisheries Review*.

• Lately, we have noticed that articles from *Marine Fisheries Review* have been picked up and reprinted in other publications. For the record we welcome such a practice and are pleased that the material is of sufficient interest to reach a wider audience.

T.A.M.