

## Of Squid, Tarpon, Blue Crab, and King Salmon

. . . . During the first 9 months of enforcing the new 200-mile Fisheries Conservation Zone, the United States Coast Guard reports boarding 1,914 vessels. Some 419 were cited for violations, 221 civil penalties were issued, and three foreign ships were seized as was part of the cargo of a fourth. Fines imposed upon the three seized vessels totaled \$589,900. In search and rescue operations during 1977, the Coast Guard responded to more than 71,000 calls for help, and provided rescue assistance estimated to have saved several thousand lives and more than \$2.8 billion worth of property. . . .

. . . . The Alaska Board of Fisheries reports adopting regulations to permit king salmon, *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, fishing opportunities in Cook Inlet waters for both sport and commercial fishermen. Eight upper Cook Inlet streams are to be reopened to recreational king salmon angling and a limited commercial set net test fishery will be opened in June. No fishing had been allowed for king salmon in the Susitna River system's eight streams since 1972, and the board noted that stocks have begun to show signs of recovery. . . .

. . . . Meanwhile, the Alaska Board of Fisheries adopted a policy for the long-term management of Cook Inlet salmon stocks, as competition between the various user groups for Cook Inlet salmon grows. The policy, according to Board Chairman Nick Szabo, Kodiak, Alaska, is not to establish exclusive uses of salmon stocks, but to define and identify the primary beneficial uses of the stocks. Their ultimate goal, said Szabo, is salmon protection and, where

feasible, rehabilitation and enhancement. One of the purposes of the policy is to provide long-term goals so both sport and commercial users may make plans consistent with those goals. . . .

. . . . With interest growing in the blue crab, a prime Texas commercial saltwater species, that state's Parks and Wildlife Department has launched a new study of the species. Disastrous blizzards along the nation's eastern seaboard last winter reportedly drove a number of professional crab fishermen



Blue crabs, *Callinectes sapidus*.

to Texas. That influx, coupled with generally higher seafood prices, stimulated crabbing to an unprecedented high level in 1977 and the year's catch was expected to set an all-time record. By the end of October, landings had totaled 7,056,000 pounds, surpassing the 1973 high of 6,881,000 pounds. In the study's first step, an aerial count of crab traps in October showed 7,000. An estimated 140 full-time and 150 part-time crab fishermen were operating along Texas' coast last fall. . . .

. . . . A survey of anadromous fish spawning streams in the Chesapeake Bay area north of the Bay Bridges has shown 447 man-made blockages on 401 inventoried streams, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources reports. The blockages include dams and weirs ranging in height from one foot up to the size of large dams like Conowingo, Lock Raven and Liberty. Most of the structures, the survey shows, are from 3 to 6 feet high and are of earthen construction. The survey, during which every stream in the area was "walked" by investigators, took 6 years, and when completed will show the amount of anadromous fish spawning grounds lost because of the blockages. Affected species include shad, herring, yellow perch, and white perch. . . .

. . . . An experimental Russian trawler, the *Argus*, failed to find commercial quantities of squid off the southeastern U.S. coast during a 2-day exploratory fishing cruise late last year, the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department reports. However, the Russians did find just enough squid to encourage them to look again early in 1978 if allowed to do so. With a crew of 74, including 11 scientists and several interpreters, the *Argus* had been doing exploratory fishing with other American observers out of Woods Hole, Mass., and was reportedly on its way to Havana for the winter. . . .

. . . . Tarpon may be staging a comeback in Texas waters according to Parks and Wildlife Department fishery biologists. Several 30-inch specimens taken there apparently as a result of a rare tarpon spawning in the fall of 1975 in Galveston Bay. The tarpon were believed to have hatched in the shallow Gulf during the summer of 1975 when a large number of that species was spotted off the upper Texas coast. The tarpon remained in the Houston Ship Channel throughout the winter and spring of 1976 near the Pasadena Deep Water Power Plant thermal discharge where water temperature was 10-16° warmer than average Galveston Bay temperatures. The fish have now been taken in Lake Sabine, Matagorda Bay, and Aransas Bay. . . .