

Charleston

SHELLFISH INVESTIGATION
INFORMATION REPORT 70-1

1967 RAZOR CLAM SURVEYS

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INTRODUCTION

Razor clams are found in isolated areas all along the Oregon coast. However, 90% of the harvest takes place on the Clatsop County beaches. Along the rest of the coast, digging is sporadic and of minor importance. This report summarizes the data for 1967 for several beaches south of Seaside. The areas are combined geographically into two groups, northern and southern. The northern group includes the Columbia River, Indian, Crescent, Cannon, Arch Cape, Cove, and Short Sand beaches. The southern group includes Bastendorff, Whiskey Run, and Myers Creek beaches. Some midcoast areas were not sampled in 1967 and are not included in this report.

Sampling of clam diggers was concentrated at the northern beaches during the July 15-August 31 closure of Clatsop beaches because some Cannon Beach people feared an invasion of personal-use and commercial diggers. They were assured this would not happen, but no data were available to support the contention.

The southern beaches were checked incidental to other work. Hence, the data are biased toward the late tides of each series when digging is usually poor.

The locations of the northern beaches are shown in Figure 1. The age composition of the sampled clams is shown in per cent in Table 1.

The age designation used in this report refers to clams that have completed the age given and are in the next year of life. Hence, a 2+ clam has completed 2 full years of growth and is in its 3rd year of life.

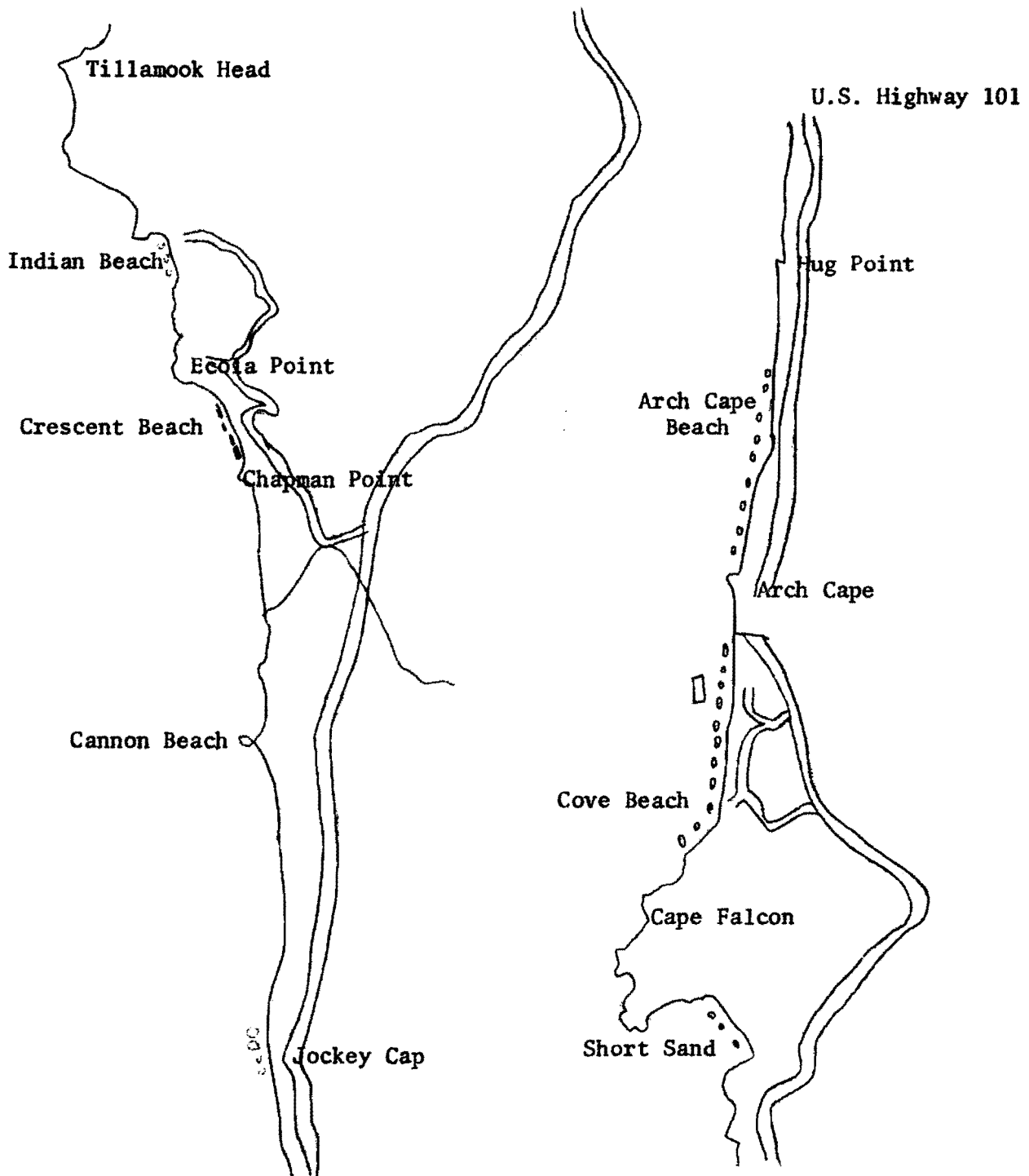


Figure 1. Location of Northern Razor Clam Beaches

Table 1. Age Composition of Razor Clams in Per Cent from Selected Oregon Beaches, 1966-67

Beach	Year	Sample Size	Age					
			0	1	2	3	4	5
Columbia River	1967	9	100.0	-	-	-	-	-
Indian	1966	130	3.8	87.7	6.9	0.8	0.8	-
	1967	152	71.7	6.6	21.7	-	-	-
Crescent	1966	80	46.0	39.0	6.0	8.0	1.0	-
	1967	48	56.0	23.0	19.0	2.0	-	-
Cannon	1966	218	7.3	90.8	0.5	0.8	0.5	-
	1967	41	12.2	2.4	85.4	-	-	-
Arch Cape	1967	696	45.0	8.0	46.0	0.6	0.4	-
Cove	1965	171	77.0	5.0	3.0	13.0	2.0	-
	1966	3,426	10.0	82.0	1.0	4.0	3.0	-
	1967	2,223	42.0	20.0	36.0	1.0	1.0	-
Short Sand	1967	600	59.0	29.0	12.0	-	-	-
Bastendorff	1967	684	81.0	15.0	3.0	1.0	-	-
Whiskey Run	1967	51	76.0	20.0	4.0	-	-	-
Myers Creek	1967	149	64.0	27.0	4.0	5.0	-	-

RESULTS

Columbia River

As a note of interest, nine clams, 1 1/2- to 3-inches long were dug inside the river mouth on Clatsop spit. I have heard reports from diggers that clams are sometimes found on the river side of the south jetty, but this is the first time in 6 years I was able to verify the reports.

Indian Beach

Indian Beach is located on the south side of Tillamook Head about 1 mile north of Ecola State Park. Access to this 1/4-mile beach is gained by following the Ecola road to its end.

Digging was good in 1967 for 2+ clams for the few people who took part. One plus clams were plentiful in 1966. There is some evidence of recruitment.

A locked gate on the Ecola road prohibited digging at Indian Beach until the later tides. Data obtained was insufficient to estimate the harvest.

Crescent Beach

Immediately south of Ecola State Park is the 1/2-mile long Crescent Beach. A path from the park leads to the beach. A random sample of 48 clams was dug in August. Most were 0's but older clams were available. Last year a sample of 80 clams produced mostly 0 and 1+ clams. Only two diggers were seen on the beach.

Cannon Beach

Cannon Beach refers to the 5 1/2-mile beach between Chapman Point and Hug Point. Digging was slow in 1967 with an average of five clams

per digger. Clams dug were mostly 2's. An average of 80 clam diggers utilized this beach each minus tide series.

Arch Cape Beach

Arch Cape Beach is 2 miles long and located between Hug Point and Arch Cape. Some 1,500 personal-use diggers dug about 16,000 clams from this area in 1967 with 0's and 2's dominating the catch. Limited commercial digging also took place. The extreme north and south ends of the beach were the most productive.

Cove Beach

Cove Beach is 1 1/2-miles long, located between Arch Cape and Cape Falcon, and straddles the Clatsop-Tillamook County line. In 1967 about 2,000 diggers dug some 22,000 clams. Last year (1966) 3,650 diggers dug 42,000 clams. The age composition is shown in Figure 2. The 0+ clams from 1965 were dug as 1+ clams in 1966 and as 2+ clams in 1967. Fair recruitment is also indicated for 1968.

With some commercial digging, Cove Beach is ranked fourth in production as related to Clatsop, Myers Creek, and Bastendorff beaches.

Short Sand Beach

Short Sand Beach is located about 16 miles south of Seaside. This 1/2-mile beach provides good digging at times, but too little data are available to estimate the 1967 harvest. On the lower tides, up to 45 diggers were counted and limits were common. The 1967 data indicated that after June over 50% of the clams dug are 0's. Several diggers commented that larger clams were available prior to June.

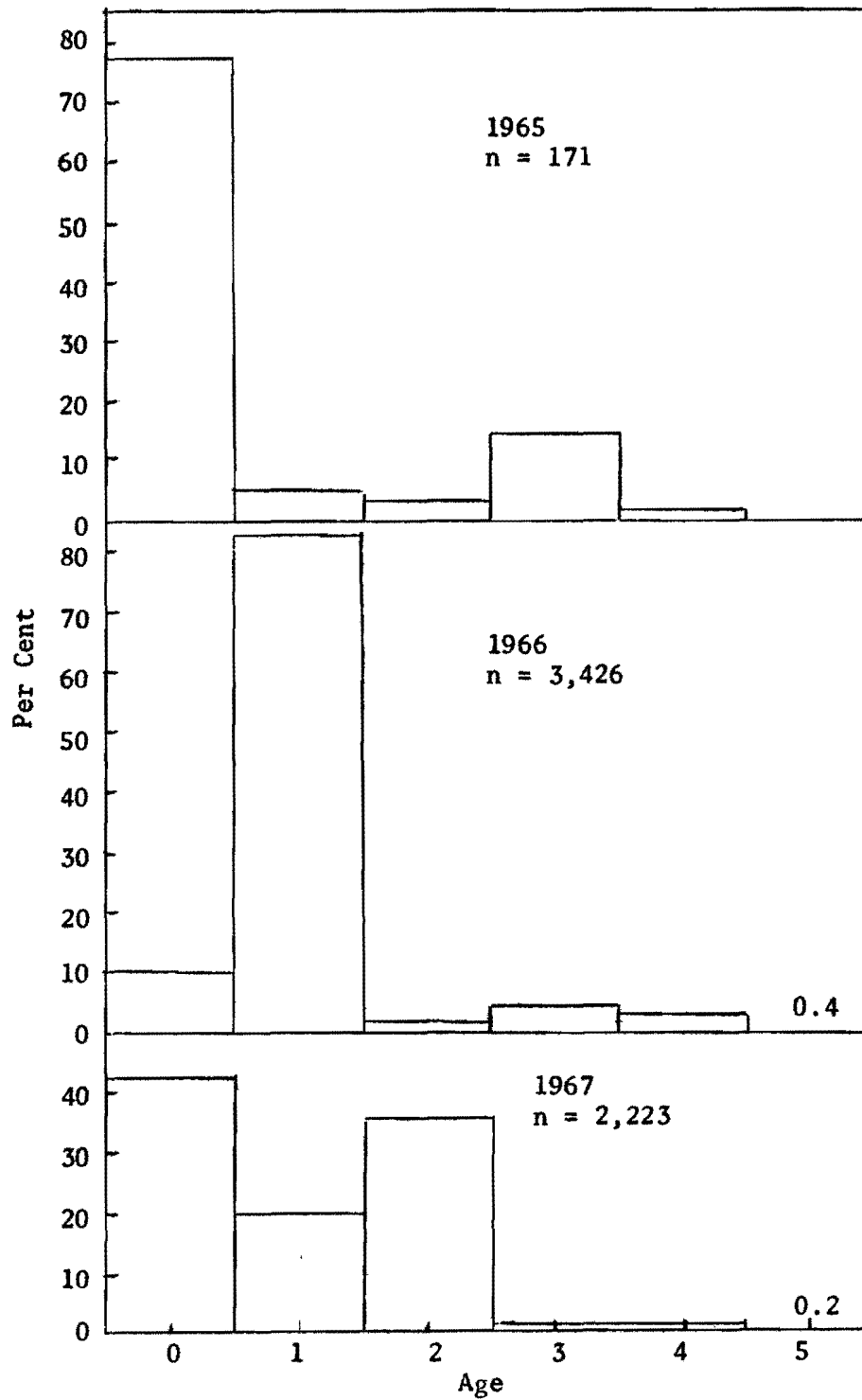


Figure 2. Age Composition of Personal-Use Razor Clams in Per Cent from Cove Beach, 1965-67

Bastendorff Beach

Incidental sampling on poor tides indicated that 2,700 diggers dug some 28,000 clams from Bastendorf Beach in 1967. This 1 1/2-mile beach is the third most productive, but clams are small after July. This beach is located on the south side of the Coos Bay entrance and is similar in conformation to Clatsop Beach. The best digging is on the north half of the beach.

Whiskey Run

About 10 miles south of Coos Bay off the Seven Devils Road, Whiskey Run Beach provides a few razor clams. Although the beach is 6 miles long, the digging takes place only on the extreme north end. Five diggers were checked in August with 51 clams, mostly 0's.

Myers Creek Beach

The most southern razor clam area in Oregon is Myers Creek Beach, located 13 miles south of Gold Beach. This 2-mile beach is the second most productive in Oregon. On four tides in July and August, 27 diggers were checked with 149 clams.

DISCUSSION

The invasion of personal-use and commercial diggers feared by some Cannon Beach people during the Clatsop Beach closure in 1967 did not materialize. Fewer than 500 diggers dug at Cannon Beach, and the effort at Cove Beach decreased. The 1967 IBM records indicate that about 1,200 clams were taken by commercial diggers from Cove, Arch Cape, and Cannon beaches combined.

The clams dug were mostly 0's and 2's which shows a good carry-over from 1966 and some recruitment for 1968.

Some people on the south coast favored a late summer closure for their beaches, but the data show that very little digging takes place after July. Bastendorff Beach was the only southern beach with substantial digging during the late summer. On poor tides up to 80 diggers per day were counted, and 80% of the clams dug were 0's.