

Charleston
Link

SHELLFISH INVESTIGATION
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THE 1974 RAZOR CLAM FISHERY

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INTRODUCTION

Razor clam catches were sampled from March through September. Clatsop beaches were sampled for number and age composition of the clams harvested and the distribution and number of diggers. Data from other beaches south of Tillamook Head were collected as time permitted. Data was compiled on clams returned from the 1973 tagging program.

SPORT FISHERY

During the 1974 season 347,000 clams were dug, on 44,000 digger trips to Clatsop beaches. This represents a 42% decrease in digger trips and a 52.1% decrease in the number of clams dug compared to the 1973 season (Figure 1). The two-mile long Seaside beach accounted for 29.8% of the digger trips, and 29.6% of the clams dug. A 42.2% increase over the average spring rainfall contributed to a reduction in all recreational usage in the Clatsop area. Table 1 lists the harvest catch rates and number of digger trips by statistical area. Clam wastage amounted to only 1.5%.

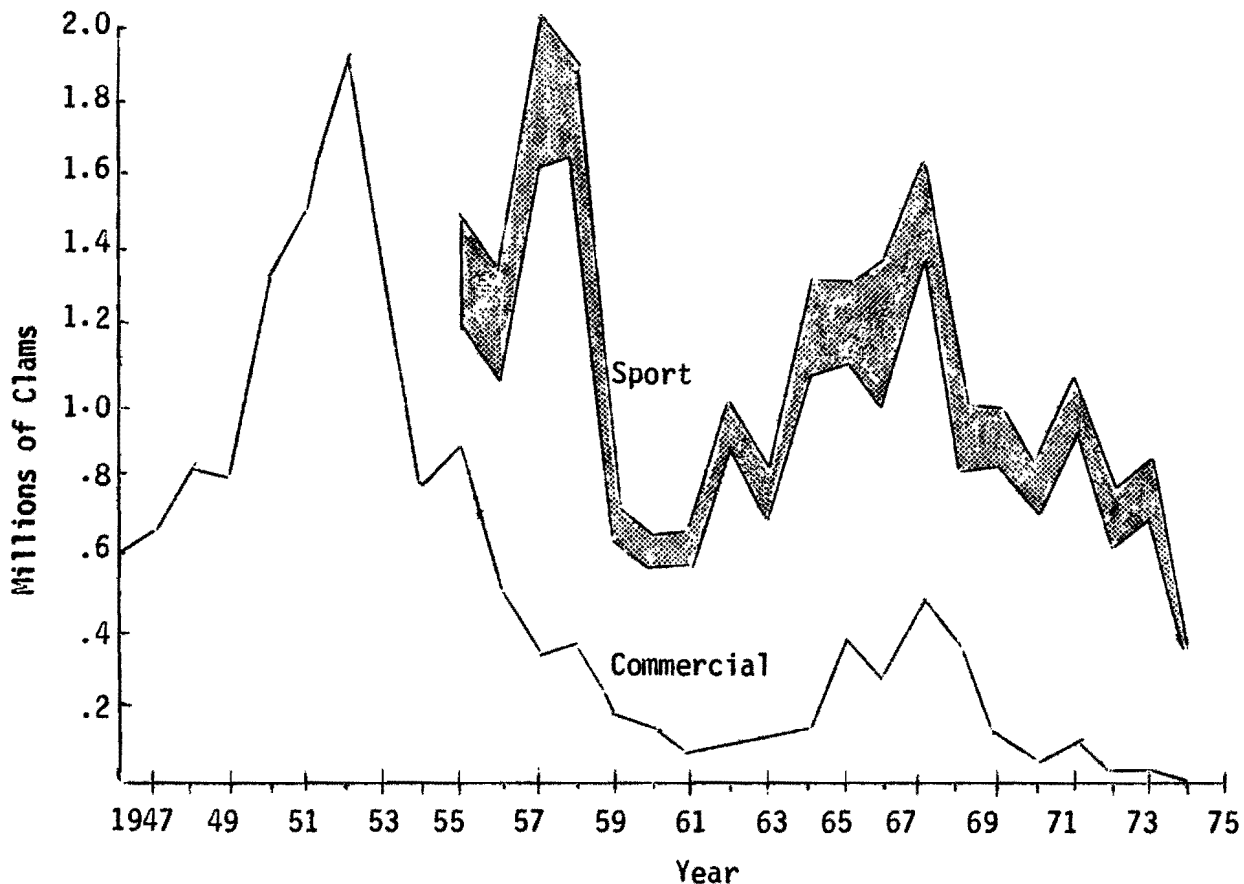


Figure 1. Annual Number of Clams Dug from 1946 to Present, Shaded Areas Indicate Number of Clams Wasted.

Table 1. Sport Harvest of Razor Clams and Number of Diggers by Area from Clatsop Beaches, March to September, 1974

Area Number	Miles of Beach	Number of Diggers	Clams/ Digger Trip	Number of Clams Dug	Number of Clams Wasted	Harvest Total
1	3.6	13,292	9.9	132,264	2,015	134,279
2	6.2	8,193	7.9	64,728	986	65,714
3	5.0	4,395	3.5	15,501	236	15,737
4	1.2	5,175	6.1	31,790	484	32,274
5	2.0	13,158	7.8	102,807	1,565	104,372
Total	18.0	44,214	7.9	347,090	5,286	352,376

- 1 - Columbia River to Fort Stevens Park Road
- 2 - Fort Stevens Park Road to Sunset Beach Road
- 3 - Sunset Beach Road to Gearhart Beach Road
- 4 - Gearhart Beach Road to Necanicum River
- 5 - Necanicum River to Tillamook Head

The 1974 age composition varied little from that of the previous five years as seen in Figure 2. Few 0+ year old clams were dug during the spring but many were being dug in the fall. Most of the 1974 set came late in the fall and was observed on all areas. The fall and winter fishery was hindered by bad weather.

COMMERCIAL FISHERY

A record low of 8,553 pounds (32,330) were dug in 1974. Areas 1 and 2 produced most of the clams landed.

RAZOR CLAM PRODUCTION SOUTH OF TILLAMOOK HEAD

Data from nine beaches south of Tillamook Head was obtained as time permitted. Table 2 lists the beaches and pertinent catch data. The most productive areas were Short Sands Beach, Indian Beach, South Beach (Newport), and Bastendorff (Coos Bay).

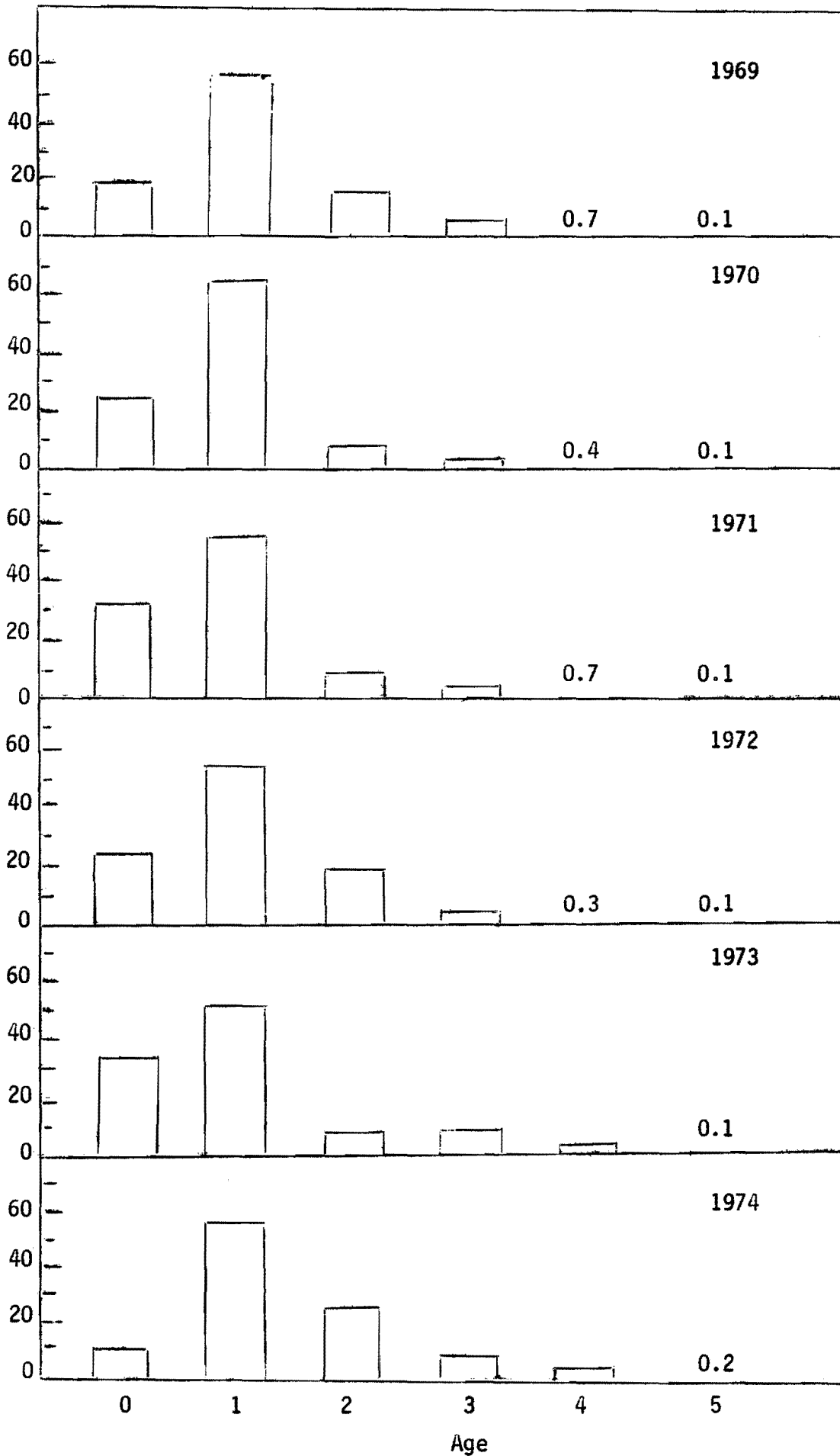


Figure 2. Percentage Age Composition of Personal Use Razor Clams From Clatsop Beaches, 1969-74

Table 2. Razor Clam Catch Data from Beaches South of Tillamook Head 1974

Area Sampled	No. of Diggers	No. of Clams	Clams/Digger	Age Composition in Percentage					
				0	1	2	3	4	5
North Jetty (Newport)	-	-	-	0	9.8	70.7	7.3	12.2	0
South Beach (Newport)	117	839	7.2	.5	4.6	34.4	15.9	36.9	7.9
Bastendorff Beach (Coos Bay)	1	9	9.0	0	55.6	22.2	22.2	0	0
South Slough Spit (Coos Bay)	-	-	-	0	38.3	48.1	11.1	1.9	.6
Indian Beach	14	112	8.0	0	12.1	54.6	30.3	3.0	0
Cannon Beach	2	7	3.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arch Cape	1	6	6.0	0	0	16.7	66.6	16.7	0
Cove Beach	13	15	1.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Short Sands Beach	2	29	14.5	65.5	24.1	6.9	3.5	0	0

1973 RAZOR CLAM TAGGING

Three hundred fifty seven (357) tags have been recovered from the 3,200 clams released during the summer closure in 1973. Data is being collected to determine tag loss, growth and mortality rates, and will be compared with Hirschhorn's work in 1952. Sampling for tags will continue through the 1975 season.