



Biologist Mike Street Checks Acid Content



Mike Street And Jim Barclay Sample Herring



Mrs. Dona White Enjoys Herring Fishing

Nets Stolen From Perq. Waters

TEXT & PHOTOS BY FRANCINE SAWYER

The herring aren't running good yet in the Perquimans River and efforts to find out why, are being stifled.

The Department of Conservation and Development, division of Commercial and Sports Fisheries are trying to take samples of "what is running," but their nets are being stolen and destroyed.

Last week alone, three nets were taken out of the Perquimans River and one out of water in Currituck.

The nets were set up along bridges in various parts of the county. Herring fishermen, fearing the nets would block the run, removed nets, it is speculated. In some cases it is thought, the nets were merely removed to be set by fishermen elsewhere.

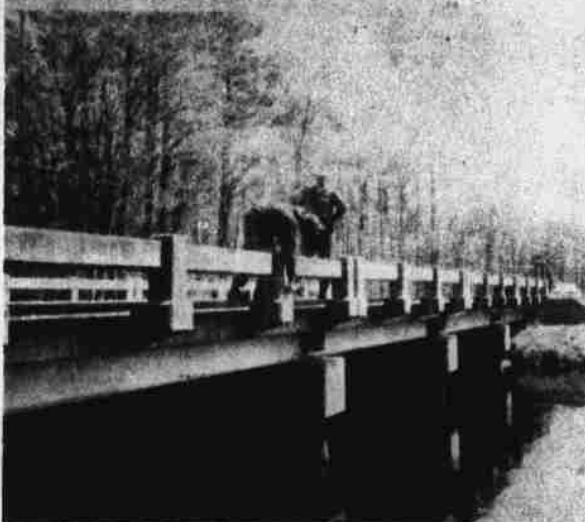
No matter the reason, it is making it difficult to survey and study the fish who are coming into the bourbon-colored Perquimans to spawn.

Mike Street, biologist with the department said he is aggravated. However, he realizes the fishermen may not be aware that the nets are there not to stop fishing, but to study and survey the fish which are in the area, to be certain a supply will always be available to area fishermen.

Some special fish could be among the annual spring run of herring and shad now underway in the rivers and creeks of coastal North Carolina. Fishermen are asked to be on the lookout for them.

Herring, shad, and sturgeon with a spaghetti-shaped piece of yellow plastic stuck in their backs are worth \$1 to \$25 each, according to Dr. Thomas Linton, N.C. Fisheries Commissioner.

State marine biologists tagged the fish in the ocean. Herring, shad, and sturgeon leave the ocean and enter freshwaters to spawn — such fish are called anadromous, according to Dr. Linton. Biologists do not know for certain where the tagged fish will go. The fish were tagged in an effort to see if anadromous fish stocks caught offshore North Carolina are subsequently caught in the freshwaters of North Carolina.



Another Net Stolen



An Egg Sample Is Caught

Coast Line

by JIM TYLER
Division Of Sports Fisheries

Seagulls change along coastal North Carolina this time of year. Most big ones migrate north. Warmer weather brings in other kinds, however, so the casual observer probably does not notice the difference.

Only five species of gulls appear on the N.C. coast regularly, according to John Fussell, a zoology graduate student at N.C. State University. John, from Morehead City, knows birds.

People, he said, think there are many more kinds of gulls around because of plumage changes. A gull can go through drastic color changes from year to year as it matures. It can go from dark brown to gray to white. Gulls also have a summer plumage and a winter plumage.

Adults of the two big, winter gulls (herring gull and great black-backed gull) leave in April and will not be back in N.C. until August-September, according to John. Some immature big ones summer here, however, and are the big, speckly ones you see. The Bonaparte's and ring-billed are smaller gulls that leave in spring and return next fall.

That leaves the black-headed laughing gull. Almost all gulls here in summer are laughers, according to John. Laughers leave N.C. only for January and February.

Three other species of gulls have been seen once or twice in N.C.: glaucous, black-headed, and kittiwake. John said the kittiwake is a bird of the open sea and might occur regularly offshore N.C.

A tern looks like a gull and is probably considered one by most folk. Closely related birds, they frequent the same areas, but are smaller, delicate-appearing, more streamlined birds. They fly "with a graceful, rather bouncy flight." Most terns' heads are topped black, a sharp contrast to the white lower half. All have forked tails. Terns, too, have plumage variations with age and season.

According to John, five terns are common along the N.C. coast during summer months: least, gull-billed, common, black, and royal. The caspian tern is common here in autumn. Forester's terns are common here during winter. Sandwich, sooty, roseate, and noddy terns are rare here.



Jim Barclay Waits For Egg Sample



Mrs. White Will Keep Men Informed Of Herring

'And I Nearly Built An Ark'

By Jim Dean
N.C. Sports Writer

Some half a dozen years ago, we had a spring that never sprung. Instead, it just gulped a breath now and then when the rain slacked off. It rained all the way through March, April and May, and one day it was dead summer and we "had missed it."

I very nearly started work on an ark that spring because every lake and river was as rich as the floor of a barn, and every time I went fishing, I couldn't tell whether I needed a fishing rod or a plow.

What saved me from total madness that spring is the same thing that is saving me from the nuthouse this spring. I found a way to catch fish despite miserable weather.

What I did was fairly simple. There are somewhere between 60,000 to 80,000 farm ponds in North Carolina, and most of them are roughly the color of a red clay road in Caswell County. But some of them are amazingly clear.

The ponds that are still clear are usually those ponds found in wooded areas where there are no cultivated fields nearby. Also, some ponds have dense grass strips around them to catch silt, and these are generally pretty clear. So are most spring-fed ponds.

Of the ponds I have permission to fish, two were still clear as of early April, despite the fact that it had been raining off and on — mostly on — for the better part of a month.

On days when I can count on staying relatively dry, I have been catching all the bluegills, shellcrackers and other panfish I wanted, and I

have been doing it with a flyrod.

It is widely thought that flyrodding with artificials doesn't get good until about the last week or so in April when the bluegills and shellcrackers go on their beds to begin spawning.

This misconception has prospered largely because most fly fishermen use topwater popping bugs or sponge rubber spiders for panfish, and it's true that topwater fishing is usually not very good until the weather gets balmy.

The trick is simply this. Instead of using topwater poppers, I use small sinking flies. My favorite is a size-10 hard-bodied black ant — the type that sells for about 50 cents in most tackle shops. Actually, any small, darkly-colored fly that will sink as much as two or three feet deep will do the trick, but ants are more durable.

Here's why they work. Although bluegills are not yet taking much food off the surface, they have already moved to the shallow banks and spawning areas, and they will often take a sunken fly when they won't take one that floats.

Also, as any experienced angler will tell you, shellcrackers rarely take topwater poppers and bugs anyway, preferring un-

derwater food. In fact, some fishermen believe that shellcrackers can only be taken on natural bait such as red worms, crickets or catalpa worms. That is not so. A shellcracker will take a sinking ant as quickly as he will a worm, and sometimes I believe the ant is even better.

If you want to try it, here's what to do. Find yourself a pond that is not too muddy, then launch a small cartop boat on it. Tie a black ant on your leader and begin to fly fish the banks. You'll find most of the shellcrackers right against the shore, but bluegills may be much farther out from the bank depending upon how deep the water is.

When you cast, the ant will sink slowly. Allow it to sink, then begin a slow retrieve, keeping your line as straight as possible. When you see the end of your flyline twitch or jerk backwards slightly, set the hook. You've had a strike. It may take a little practice to learn how to keep from missing these strikes, but your effort will be well rewarded.

It's one way to beat a soggy spring, and it's a heap more profitable than cussing the weatherman.

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NOTICE MEETING of BOARD of EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW

The Board of County Commissioners of Perquimans County, will meet as a Board of Equalization & Review in the courthouse, Hertford, N.C., on Monday, April 23, 1973, at 10:00 o'clock A.M. for the purpose of hearing complaints and the equalization of property values. The Board expects to complete its business and adjourn on Monday, April 23, 1973. In the event of later adjournment, notice to that effect will be published in this newspaper.

C. D. Spivey, Sr.

TAX SUPERVISOR

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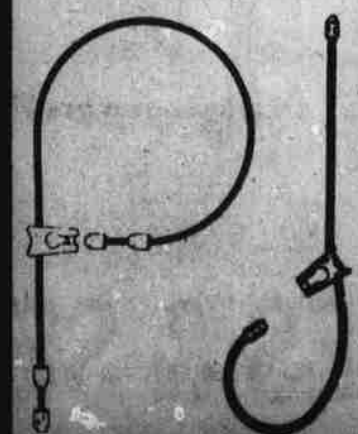


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