

# TROPIC NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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## Fish is Food

Fisherman's Day usually coincides with the feast of St. Peter, the Patron saint of Fishermen, and is celebrated on June 29th in most Caribbean islands. The theme selected for Fisherman's Day 1995 is "**Fish is Food**".

Fish has long been recognized as highly desirable and nutritious food. In almost every archaeological excavation of a coastal civilization, piles of seashells and fish bones testify to the use of fish products as food.

Fish, as meat, contains some 18 to 22 percent of easily digested protein as well as essential amino acids that the human body cannot manufacture. Fish is good food in its own right but, equally important, small quantities taken with other staple foods poor in protein but rich in energy can provide nutritious, fully-rounded diet.

An escalating world population and the growing urgency to make use of all sources of food has spurred efforts to increase the supply of fish.

Total world production (including fish used for producing fish meal) reached 101.3 million tonnes in 1993, and that this sustained a consumption rate of 13 kg per person per year. In order to hold consumption at this level in the face of greater population growth, world fisheries will have to boost annual production of food fish from its present level of 72.3 million tonnes to 91 million tonnes per year.

The people of the Lesser Antilles are big consumers of fish, about 25 kg per head per year. In comparison, per capita consumption in the Greater Antilles (Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic and Jamaica) is 12.5 kg per annum. As in the past, a large part of this demand is met by imports since local production cannot satisfy this high demand. An estimated 16,500 mt was imported in 1987 at an estimated cost of US \$56 million (FAO Yearbook of Fishery Statistics, Vol. 65, 1987).

In the fight against hunger, it is necessary to institute programs of action which deal with planning and management at both national and regional levels; the technical, economic and social development of fishing communities, the expansion and improvement of aquaculture; and the part which fisheries can play in providing a healthy diet.

Achieving sustained production and avoiding disastrous overfishing is a major goal in fisheries at every level. While "fish as food" alone cannot close the subregions protein gap, it could make a greater contribution to easing undernourishment and malnutrition than at the present. For this to be achieved, food and nutritional considerations must become an integral part of the national and regional plans for fisheries management and development.



Currently, the focus on the sea for feeding the masses has taken a different approach. For many years man has viewed the sea as a limitless source of bounty to be fished, harvested, mined and salvaged. In actuality, the sea is a finite resource with limited productive capacity and therefore will not be able to produce in the quantities required to sustain the world's ever growing population.

Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius wrote in 1609: "Everyone admits that if a great many persons hunt on the land or fish in a river, the forest is easily exhausted of wild animals and the river of fish, but such a contingency is impossible in the case of the sea." Amazingly, many in the fishing communities still hold this assumption in the 20th century.

In the long run, it is people's attitudes, prejudices, and perspectives that will influence the future of the oceans, and of all of us who depend upon them. Already, economists, conservationists, business owners, community leaders, villagers, and citizens are encouraging the kinds of changes which stem from a reassessment of our place on the planet. But all the solutions in all the world will accomplish little without a basic change in attitudes—from thoughtlessly taking all we can get toward thoughtfully living with what we need.

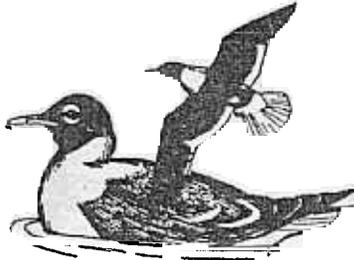
### Quote

The beauty and genius of a work of art may be destroyed; a vanished harmony may yet again inspire the composer; but when the last individual of a race of living beings breathes no more, another heaven and another earth must pass before such a one can be again.

## Rescue at Sea

The caller reported that there was an injured bird on the beach at Bolongo – Limetree Bay Resort. Jacqueline Boggs of Pickerington, Ohio, a guest at the resort had witnessed the scuffle between the two sea gulls which resulted in the injury.

When we arrived, Mike at the Activities Desk pointed over to the rocks on the far end of the beach where the injured gull had retired. As we proceeded around the rocks, Mike rowed out in his kayak towards the bird. The gull continued around the rocks, then jumped into the water and swam away. At that point, Mike returned to shore got our net and headed back towards the gull where he finally caught him.



*Larus atricilla*

The amazing thing about the rescue was that Mike accomplished the entire event with a cast on his right wrist. Many Thanks goes out to Mike and Jacqueline !

The sea gull was taken to veterinarian Dr. Andrew Williamson's office at Tillet Garden, where it was checked out and later released to the Division of Fish and Wildlife to recuperate. There were no visible injuries but Dr. Williamson said that it might have suffered a concussion from the impact of the scuffle.

By Sunday evening staff at the Division of Fish and Wildlife released the sea gull. At first the gull stayed near to the Redhook area, but by midday it had joined a nearby flock.

Thank you also to Donna George, Administrative Assistant, for taking the call, assisting in rescuing the gull and transporting it to the veterinarian's office.

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Trees were saved by printing on recycled paper

## French Town Fathers's Day Tournament

Here are some numbers from the annual Frenchtown Father's Day Tournament held on Sunday June 11, 1995. There were a total of 172 anglers aboard 52 boats. A total of 182 fish caught weighed in at 1,257.7 lbs. The fishermen had six and a half hours to do the job - from lines in the water at 5:00 am to 11:30 am, with the boats required to be back at the Frenchman's wharf by noon.

The perimeter of the fishing area extended from south of St. John to French Cap, around Sail Rock, to the islands north of St. Thomas and Thatch Cay. Boats were not allowed to go out to the dropoff.

There were nine species caught. Below is a list of the numbers and weight ranges.

Species	Number caught	Weight range
Barjack	5	
Barracuda	125	2.0 lbs – 26.0 lbs
Bonito	14	1.8 lbs – 11.0 lbs
Mackerals	7	1.0 lb – 5.2 lbs
Dolphin	1	9.2 lbs
Kingfish	22	3.6 lbs – 41.0 lbs Winner
Tuna	1	15.2 lbs

The largest fish caught was a Kingfish weighing 41 pounds with a 18.8 pound kingfish taking second place in that division. The overall heaviest haul was 86.0 pounds.

Tournament technical assistance was provided by two mainland marine researchers working locally with the government's Fish and Wildlife Division.

A cruise for two aboard the Festivale and a 30-HP Yamaha outboard engine were prizes donated by Bon Voyage Travel and Offshore Marine. Congratulation to all winners and better luck next year to all others.



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GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS  
OF THE UNITED STATES

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