

Island   
**Ad-Vantages** 

**THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE**

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**It takes a village to make a season**

With this year's scallop season a wrap, many fishermen are about to shift gears, both literally in terms of rerigging of their boats and more metaphorically through turning their attention to the migratory rhythms of lobsters as they gradually move inshore. Seasons are fascinating phenomena. We tend to associate them with changes in nature like the sudden emergence of crocus in the spring or the coloring of the foliage in the fall. And we adapt accordingly, slightly changing the rhythms of our lives and sensing the emergence of different moods and affects. Our lives are tightly entangled with nonhuman life in this way.

But seasons are not made by nature alone.

In my home country, Norway, a sure sign of spring used to be fishermen getting their gear ready, mending traps and making sure bait supply was sufficient. Sounds familiar? Spring was when coastal communities on the west coast were getting ready for lobster fishing, which back in the early 1900s was a thriving form of fishery in which few worried about overfishing. Lobsters were primarily exported, to the UK and elsewhere in Europe where wealthy consumers could afford it. But spring was also a time when local fishermen could get a taste of the much appreciated 'sea cardinal'. For otherwise poor fishermen, this was long before Norway found oil, spring also meant getting a chance to experience high class life. On the country's much celebrated national day, May 17, families got together, put out their finest tablecloths and silver cutlery and feasted on lobsters. As much as feeding people, lobsters fed into the project of building national pride in a young and poor nation.

Lobster spring season wouldn't last long, however. Severe overfishing soon led to the near extinction of the crustacean in Norwegian waters. Something had to be done, and lobstering got strictly forbidden during spring and the rest of the year expect for October to December. Spring as a lobster season was gone. Lobstering went from being a lucrative fishery to being primarily something people did for fun. Spring was no longer associated with the joys of lobstering, and fall gained new seasonal moods and affects as it became a time for beating the biting cold, wind and waves to harvest a few, but perhaps even more appreciated, of the lobster left in the sea.

The current shift of gears from scallop dredging and diving to lobster trapping invites us to think how seasons emerge. They are surely a thing of nature, but the ways in which we choose to entangle with marine life plays a part in this too. It takes a village to make a season, one might say, a village made up of nature, culture, social, economic, political, and affective relations, all operating together.

Do you have a question about our fisheries? Send it to [info@coastalfisheries.org](mailto:info@coastalfisheries.org) or call 207.367.2708

**Prices to Harvesters**

Lobsters: \$7.15-\$8.15/lb

Diesel: \$4.85/gal

(Prices in Stonington on 3/31/23)

**Oceanographic Buoy I-01**

44°6'10"N 68°6'44"W - Frenchboro

Water Temperature (50 meters): 38.43 °F (Avg)

Source: [www.neracoos.org](http://www.neracoos.org)