

THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE

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Mushrooms, and Entering the Future of Fishing

It's been a wet summer here in Maine. And that meant vacationland seemed a little less "vacationy." It meant tomatoes grew slower, sunny boat rides were fewer and farther in between, and hiking with kiddos took more motivation (candy) than ever. But it was a great year for mushrooms, and anyone who knows me well, knows that I love foraging for mushrooms... Or any free food, for that matter. And while I am still very much an amateur mycologist, I was able to add a few species to my short list of fungi that I can identify, taste good and won't kill me in some horrible science fiction manner.

Every time I add a new species to my list, I make note of where I found them and what they look like, and then I get really excited when I go out searching for a specific species for the first time with some kind of confidence that I might get some. But I also have a different feeling. I feel sort of bad for the people that already knew about this mushroom. Because now they have one more person to compete with for this limited bounty, and while I love sharing my love of mushrooms with others, I understand why some people are guarded about their knowledge of what is out there and how to find it, and think a lot about how many others are out looking for it.

To understand this is to understand part of what it's like to be a fisherman. Fortunately, most people aren't willing to bushwhack for miles through the woods for a pizza topping. But for fishermen, we're talking about a livelihood and there are only so many livelihoods out there. Fishery managers use stock assessments and statistics to make imperfect guesses on how many fishermen can utilize each species, and then they have even harder work deciding **who** gets to harvest them. We call this ability to start participating in a specific kind of fish, "entry" or "access". And while it's not the sexiest fishery issue out there, it's one of the most important, especially nowadays. With climate change, fish are moving, and when they get here we will have to decide if it's the same people (from where the fish used to be) that get to harvest them, or if these "new" fish can become available to new fishermen, who might be saying good bye to the fisheries that they once knew. I don't have answers here, except to say that we better figure it out. Our fishermen and our communities are depending on us. Also, stay away from my mushroom spots!

Do you have a question about our fisheries? Send it to info@coastalfisheries.org or call 207.367.2708. Learn more about MCCF by visiting us at www.coastalfisheries.org.

FISHERIES LOG

Prices to Harvesters:

Lobsters (select): \$6.75/lb.

Lobster (hard): \$5.75/lb.

Lobster (shedder) \$4.50/lb.

Bait (pogies): \$90/box

Fuel (diesel): \$3.89/gal.

Disclaimer: figures collected on 10/23/23 in Stonington

Oceanographic Buoy I-01

44°6'10"N 68°6'44"W – Frenchboro

Surface Temperature (1 meters): 12.23°C (54.01°F)

Bottom Temperature (50 meters): 11.25°C (52.25°F)

Source: www.neracoos.org