

Island  **THE WEEKLY
Ad-Vantages**  **PACKET**

THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE
By: Captain Leroy Weed

The Migration of the Lobster

August 1, 2024

We don't often think of a lobster migrating. Have you ever wondered why they do? They don't migrate from Massachusetts to Maine, but rather, shorter, seasonal migrations back and forth between shallow and deeper waters where they overwinter and enjoy stable 40ish degree water temperatures.

Come spring, as the deep water starts to warm, lobsters seem to know it's time to head for the coast. There is a special reason, most of the deeper offshore bottom is mud, with nowhere they can hide during shedding time. When they shed their shell, they are as soft as a jellyfish and very vulnerable. The rockbound coast of Maine supplies a hiding place for them to safely shed. The migration from deep water begins in March. They find themselves a rock to hide under or cobble bottom. They hunker down and prepare to molt.

By the end of June, they have shed their shell and are famished after expending so much energy! Their first post-shed meal is usually their old shell, conveniently nearby, and it recycles the critical shell-forming nutrient, chitin, to aid in hardening their new shell. Water temperatures on bottom have reached 50 degrees or better and these hungry and now hard-enough-to-start-walking lobsters are on a mission to find food.

That is how the fishery came to be a summer activity- capitalizing on the shallow water, super accessible, hungry lobster. Lobsters eat all summer long, and into the fall, fattening up and making thicker shells to support a deepwater migration in October-November, and overwintering in deeper, cold-but temperature stable, waters offshore.

Back by popular demand - our Coastal Fisheries Fanfare Event 8/20 6:30pm. Check out more information about it here. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/coastal-fisheries-fanfare-sea-shanties-storytelling-song-by-fishermen-tickets-944255833617>.

Learn more about MCCF by visiting us at www.coastalfisheries.org.

Prices to Harvesters in Stonington, as of 7/29/2024

Lobster (hard): \$6.15/lb.
Lobster (shedder) \$4.75/lb.
Bait (pogies): \$90/box
Fuel (diesel): \$3.45/gal

Oceanographic Buoy I-01

44°6'10"N 68°6'44"W - Frenchboro
Top Temperature (1 meter): 53.46°F 11.92°C
Bottom Temperature (50 meters):
48.13°F 8.96°C

Source: www.neracoos.org