

Island  **THE WEEKLY
Ad-Vantages PACKET**

THE VIEW FROM ATLANTIC AVENUE
By: Michael Cichoracki

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On The Right Side?

The lobster fishing summer season is in full swing a few scant days until Labor Day. Will we flourish or flounder this winter? Here in Discovery Wharf we educate and entertain, and today I will focus on the Winter Flounder in the tank *Pseudopleuronectes americanus*, *blackback*, *white sole*, *lemon sole*, *winter flounder*.... *all designations for the same animal*.

Known as a right sided fish or "dextral" in more science speaking ways, Ayuh! why science folks tend to Latin and specialized forms of communicating is an entirely different conversation, but it is signaling that the eyes of a winter flounder as an adult are on its right side. Imagine a very juvenile flounder of only a couple of weeks old that swims like most other fish and has one eye on either side of its head. As the fish matures its left eye migrates to the right side of its body as it begins to steadily begin to swim on its left side and become a "flatfish", laying in the mud and sand with its topside well camouflaged and its bottom side as white as snow.

If you catch one of these flatfish and want to know if it is a winter flounder or a summer flounder, I would suggest you locate the ventral fin (the one that non flat fish have on their underside), hold the catch in a way that puts that fin under it. Now, are its eyes on the right or left?

Left or right, both are quite tasty and, in the winter, and spring they spawn in shallow inshore waters. Hint, they like clam bellies hovering just a few inches above their right sides. Be sure to check the minimums for harvestable winter flounder and catch limits. Happy fishing in the "hazy shade of winter"! Learn more about MCCF by visiting us at www.coastalfisheries.org.

Prices to Harvesters in Stonington, as of 8/26/2024

Lobster (hard): \$6.15/lb.
Lobster (shedder) \$4.75/lb.
Bait (pogies): \$90/box
Fuel (diesel): \$3.30/gal

Oceanographic Buoy I-01

44°6'10"N 68°6'44"W – Frenchboro
Top Temperature (1 meter): 55.45°F 12.47°C
Bottom Temperature (50 meters): 50.25°F 10.14°C

Source: www.neracoos.org