

Are You Smarter Than A Stone Crab?

*A local outreach effort to raise awareness of Collier County's
Commercial Stone Crab Industry*



**NATIONAL WORKING
WATERFRONTS AND WATERWAYS
SYMPOSIUM
TACOMA, WA
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Outline



- Overview of Florida's stone crab fishery
- Rationale for a local seafood outreach program
- “*AYSTASC*” Program
 - Goals
 - Partners
 - Components
 - Outcomes
- Tips for implementing a similar program in your area



Image credit: Bryan Fluech,

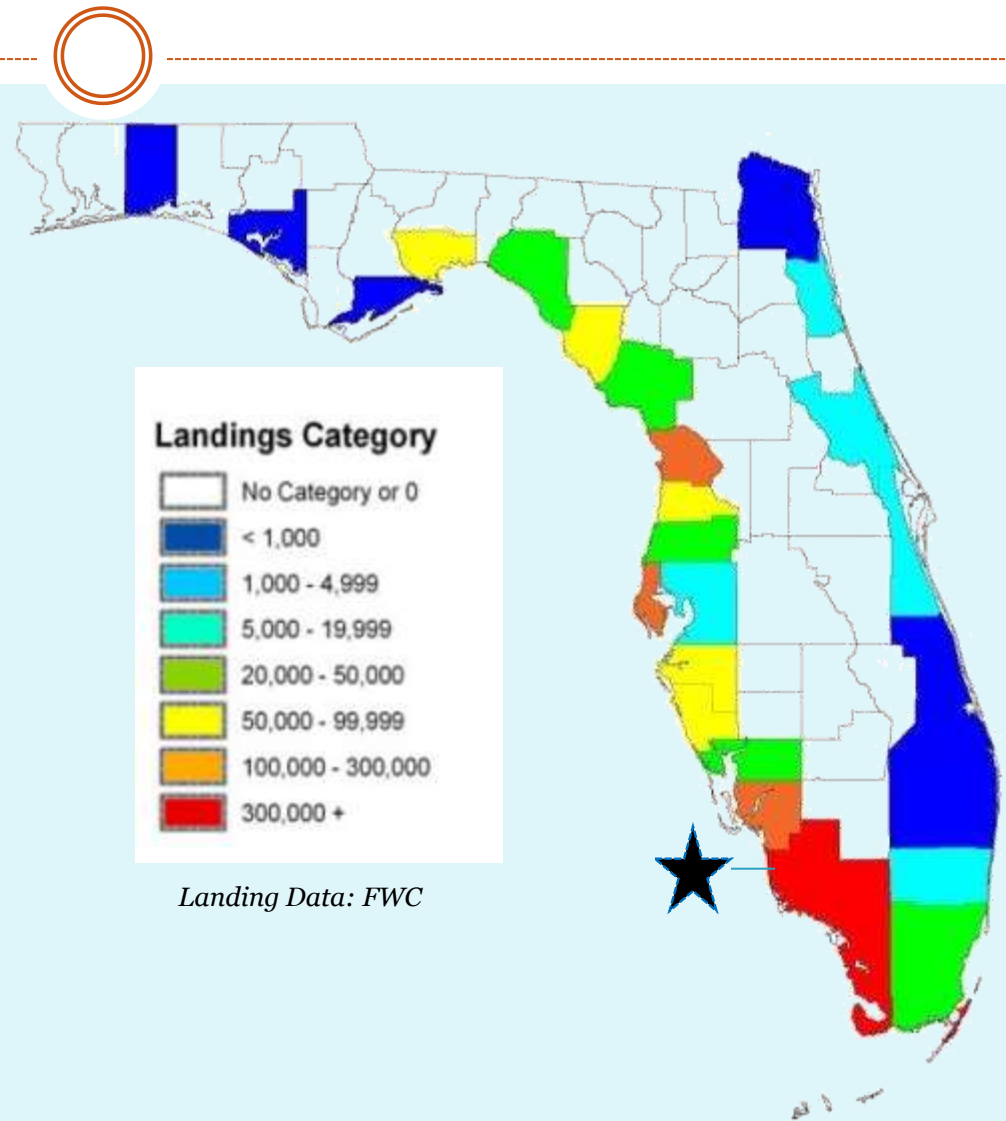
Florida's Commercial Stone Crab Fishery

Florida produces approximately 98% of stone crab claws landed in the U.S.

Source: NOAA



Image credit: Bryan Fluech



Collier County's Commercial Stone Crab Industry

- # 1 commercial fishery
 - In production and value
- Supported by 20 wholesale and 93 retail dealers

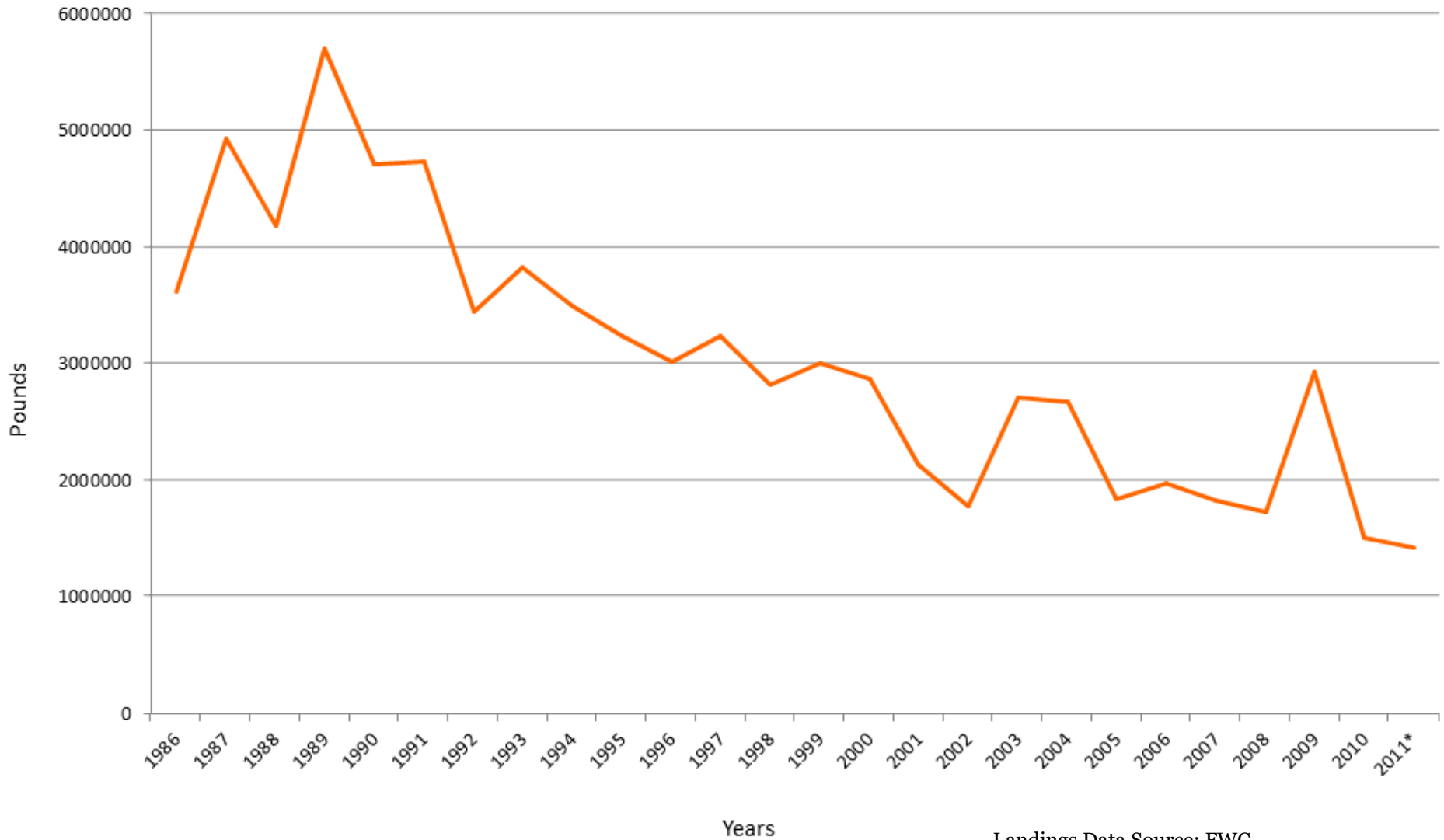
2011/2012 Season

- 616,779 lbs claws landed
- Estimated dockside value:
 - **\$5.5 million**

Source: FWC



Commercial Landings: Collier County 1986-2011



Landings Data Source: FWC

- Loss of working waterfronts and coastal development
- Regulation changes
- Competition from imports
- Natural disasters
- Attrition



Growing Interests in Local Seafood

especially stone crabs



“Are You Smarter than a Stone Crab?”



- Created: 2011
- Lecture, sampling and fish house tour-based outreach program
- Offered 3 times during season
- Target audience: Collier County residents and visitors*
- Limited space



Program Goals



- Educate participants about the biology and life history of stone crabs
- Provide insight into the management of Florida's stone crab fishery
- Develop more informed consumers about local seafood and its supporting infrastructure
- **Increase awareness of the economic and cultural importance of Collier County's stone crab industry**
- Collaborate with local stone crab businesses to support and promote their industry



Image credits: Bryan Fluech

Program Partners

Industry Partners

- Captain Kirk's Stone Crab
 - Naples
- Grimm's Stone Crab Inc.
 - Everglades City

Education Partners

- Rookery Bay NERR
- Everglades City Museum



Image credit: Capt. Kirks



Image credit: Bryan Fluech

Program Components



- Lectures
 - Biology and life history
 - Stone crab management
 - Seafood safety
 - *History and heritage**
- Seafood sampling
 - Stone crab vs. blue crab
- Fish House Tour
 - “Life” in the industry
 - Processing
 - Regulatory oversight
 - Q&A
 - Market *optional*



Scenes from the Fish House



Image credit: Bryan Fluech

Marketing Efforts

- Email distribution lists
- Newspaper articles
- Social media
 - Facebook
 - Blogs
- Flyers at outreach events
- Program participants
 - Word of mouth

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A STONE CRAB?

Wednesday, January 23rd

3:30PM- 6:30PM EST

Tour starts at *Everglades City Museum*
105 West Broadway, Everglades City, FL

Join your local **Sea Grant Extension Agent** to explore why stone crabs are one of Florida's most valuable commercial fisheries.

DURING THIS PROGRAM YOU WILL:

- Learn about the biology of stone crabs & how the fishery is managed
- Visit a local fish house in Everglades City to see what it's like to work in the stone crab industry
- Discover the rich heritage associated with stone crab fishing and other commercial fisheries in southwest Florida
- **SAMPLE** locally caught stone crabs

Cost: \$17

To register visit:

<http://stonecrabtourjan23.eventbrite.com/#>

Questions? Contact Bryan Fluech: fluech@ufl.edu or 239-438-5594



Program Outcomes



- Five sessions offered Fall 2011-Winter 2013
- All sessions sold out with a waiting list
 - 200+ participants

Approximately 90% of participants have “strongly agreed” or “agreed” the program increased their awareness and appreciation of the local commercial stone crab industry.



Image credit: Bryan Fluech

What was the most important thing you learned from today's program?



- *Both claws can be removed if they meet the minimum size limit*
- *The connection between the biology of the crabs and the reason for managing them*
- *The history of the stone crab industry; the ocean to plate process*
- *How the crabs claws are processed*
- *The history and culture of Everglades City and their dependence on the fishing industry*



Image credit: Bryan Fluech

Program Benefits to Industry Partners



- Positive spotlight on the area's commercial industry
- Community involvement
- Repeat business & recognition
 - Revenue generator through retail market sales*



Suggestions for Developing Similar Programs



- Seek out willing partners –JUST ASK
 - *Education and industry*
- Work with and respect partner schedules
 - *Plan appropriately*
 - *Flexibility*
- Involve all partners in planning and marketing efforts
 - Identify venues
 - Program schedules
 - Review materials
- Share credit
 - Media stories
 - Social media
- Keep communication lines opens



Image credit: Bryan Fluech

Thank You



Bryan Fluech
Florida Sea Grant Extension Agent/
Collier County Extension Director
University of Florida/IFAS
(239) 438-5594
fluech@ufl.edu



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