

# News from Shore

a publication of the Fisheries Observation Science Program



Fall 2013

## Observer Spotlight: Robert Morgan

Observing since 2012 ■ Port: Westport



A native of Mio, Michigan, Robert Morgan became an observer as a way to see the West coast and to “experience something new.”

Little did he know “something new” would include

two at-sea emergency situations in his first year, including saving a deck hand’s life. To acknowledge his outstanding performance in these situations as well as his excellent data collecting, Robert is our first Featured Observer.

Robert began as a catch share observer. He transitioned to the non-catch share fishery and is currently in the process of returning to catch shares. When asked what his favorite part of being an observer is, he says he likes “seeing species that (he) has never seen before and most people outside of the

industry would never get to see.” His least favorite part? Bad weather. He prefers longline gear because the fish come up alive and was surprised by the amount of fish hake vessels harvest in one trip. So which does he prefer: catch share or non-catch share? Non-catch share shrimp vessels. Why? Because “it can be busy but they shut down at night so everybody gets to sleep.”

No surprise that Robert spends his leisure time outside. He enjoys getting his family out of the house for hiking, fishing, digging razor clams and going to the beach. If he’s on his own, he goes spearfishing, hunting or hanging out on the local fishing pier while waiting for his crab pots to fill up. We asked what was on his Bucket List: taking his family snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef. Apparently this mid-west boy has taken a shine to the ocean.

Thanks for all your hard work Robert!



## Keep in Touch

The Fisheries Observation Science (FOS) team (that’s us) has its own section on the Northwest Fisheries Science Center recently updated [website](#). This is a great resource to bookmark as it’s where current briefing schedules, updated manuals and other observer-related information is posted. It’s also where you can link to the reports our data is used to create such as the [Groundfish Mortality](#) and [Pacific Halibut bycatch](#) reports. Check them out to see how all your data looks in print.

## From the Program

*Hello Observers!*

*Welcome to the first edition of Observer News. This is a quarterly newsletter designed specifically to strengthen our communication with you. Our goal is to not only share observer-related information, but also to give you a broader view of how the data you collect plays into the fisheries management dynamic. We also want to help you stay current with industry-related topics and news.*

*As this newsletter is a new project for us, we’d appreciate your feedback. We want it to be useful to you, not another email that gets deleted. We’d also love for you to help us improve the name. See page 3 for details. Please send comments and suggestions to Rebecca Hoch at [rebecca.hoch@noaa.gov](mailto:rebecca.hoch@noaa.gov).*

*As always, thank you for your ongoing efforts and outstanding work. It is a pleasure and honor to have you as part of the Fisheries Observation Science Program.*

*Sincerely,*

Jon T. McVeigh  
Program Manager

# Data Collection Review

by Vanessa Tuttle  
ASHOP Team Lead

For the *first* science article, in our *first* newsletter I thought I would provide an overview of some of the special data collections that are happening - you guessed it - in the name of science.

This past spring and early summer saw a quite a bit of salmon shark bycatch in the hake fishery (45 observed organisms, to be exact). Several industrious



Salmon shark eating tasty hake treats. Photo by A-SHOP observer Mark Inc.

observers took it upon themselves to start cutting up and weighing the sharks. We then asked them to take lengths as well. Next thing you know, we have enough data to produce a decent length-weight chart. This will be a great enhancement to our data

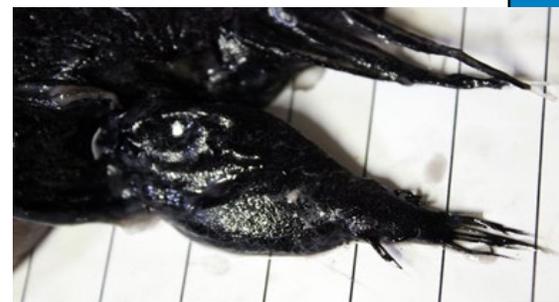
collection – freeing us up from visual estimates, which is a vast improvement. We really appreciate it when you take the initiative to collect data that takes extra effort and time. Good job!

Surprisingly little is known about when and where hake spawn. Seems difficult to believe, considering we have an entire survey and research team dedicated to this one species, but it is true. One of the recommendations at the hake stock assessment review this year was to collect ovaries for a maturity study. Because the fishery extends from May to December, it provides the opportunity to get ovaries from outside of the typical hake survey season (June-August). So the at-sea hake observers were tasked with collecting ovaries this year. To date, observers have collected almost 200 samples, and we hope to get 50 more in late November and December. Some initial results from this data collection are expected by next spring, so stay tuned for that.

2013 marks the fifth year hake observers have been collecting Chinook genetics samples. This data set is becoming

more robust and we are starting to detect inter-annual variations in stock impacts and look for correlations with large scale climate variability (cooling periods and warming periods). Ultimately, historical data from salmon scale samples (1977-2000s) should help fill in the gaps, and provide a big picture view of the stocks represented in Chinook bycatch over several decades. Collecting genetics samples is tedious and time consuming, we know it! Your efforts are definitely appreciated.

In interesting deep sea critter news – here is a picture of a Sea devil with parasitic male attached. These very small males actually become vascularized with the female, and there can be more than one male attached to a female.



Sea devil with parasitic male attached. Photo by A-SHOP observer David Baisch.

## Helpful Hints

**Netbook maintenance:** Even if you don't use it very often, leave your netbook on and logged in overnight at least once a week when on land to automatically install updates. Updates are scheduled to run daily at 3am. They run in the background when you work and will slow everything down until they are installed, so better to let them run while you sleep.

## The ABC's of Stock Assessment

Stock assessments are crucial to fisheries management. They determine quotas, species of concern and overall health of the fisheries. The data you collect directly affects their outcome. Although this [video clip](#) neglects to mention the observer role in data collection process (it claims the fishermen collect the data), it does a good job of quickly defining and explaining stock assessments and their role in fisheries management. We thought you'd find the information interesting and useful. If you have questions about stock assessments and want to know more about them, please visit the Northwest Fisheries Science Center's [Assessment Team's](#) web page. Your debriefer can also put you in contact with assessment team members if you'd like to discuss the topic with one of our scientists.



## From the Kitchen

by John LaFargue  
CA Coordinator

I love food. I also love fishing and crabbing. This is widely known and has led to me being coerced into sharing my version of Crab Shu Mai.

I am not very good at following directions...I mean recipes. The following is a guideline. I made five different versions last week, using anything from sake and Hoisin sauce to wild mushrooms. I learned it's hard to go wrong, but if you add more crab or liquid it does throw off the texture a little.

My favorite version had the following proportions with a piece of the crab claw meat pressed on top. If you choose to add more crab, I recommend adding a little more fat, either a fattier ground pork or a little sesame oil. If you don't have an ingredient, substitute! No green onion? Use regular onion or a little garlic. No mirin? Add a little sake, or leave it out entirely.

I didn't have a bamboo steamer so I used a pot with a regular steaming basket lined with cabbage leaves. It worked perfectly. Just don't let the dumplings touch each other.

There are a million versions of this online if you need further inspiration. Enjoy!

### Did you know...

... there have been 2250 catch share trips and 737 non-catch share trips so far this year. This translates into 7165 catch share sea days and 1399 non-catch share sea days since January 1, 2013.

... salmon sharks segregate by gender, with most males heading to the Western North Pacific and most females heading to the Eastern North Pacific.

## Crab Shu Mai

### For the shu mai:

3/4 pound coarsely ground pork  
3 green onions, thinly sliced on the bias  
2 tablespoons finely grated fresh ginger  
1 tablespoon mirin or sake  
1 teaspoon kosher salt or splash of soy sauce  
1/4 pound crab meat, reserve  
extra crab claw or leg meat for top garnish  
round gyoza (pot sticker) wrappers  
cabbage leave

1. Mix all the sauce ingredients and set aside.
2. In a bowl, mix the pork, green onions, ginger, mirin and salt. Fold in the crab meat trying to not break it up too much.
3. Make an "OK" sign with your thumb and forefinger. Place a single wrapper over the "O" and lightly press a depression in the wrapper. Place a heaping tablespoon of the filling in the center of the wrapper, add a chunk of crab claw meat on top and lightly compress the edges all around, forming an open cup.
4. Transfer the dumpling to a plate and cover with a moist paper towel to prevent the edges from drying out. This will effect the finished texture. Repeat with the remaining wrappers and filling.
5. Fill a wok or pot with a couple inches of water. Bring to a boil. Arrange the cabbage leaves on two tiers of a bamboo steamer so they overlap slightly or on top of the steamer basket if you don't have a bamboo steamer. I steamed the cabbage in place for a few minutes to make it easier to place the dumplings.
6. Add the dumplings to the steamer and stack the tiers. Place a cloth towel over the bamboo steamer basket or pot, put the lid on and fold the towel over the lid. This keeps condensation from dripping on to the shu mai. Bring water back up to a boil, reduce heat to a simmer and steam until the shu mai are just cooked, 8-10 minutes.
7. Serve with dipping sauce of choice: Chinese mustard, chili oil, garlic chili paste with soy sauce or my favorite equal parts black vinegar and soy sauce with fresh grated ginger and green onions.

... The Horn Shark (*Heterodontus francisci*) has been encountered in 7 hauls during the period 2002-2012, which is 4 more encounters than the Purple Globe Crab (*Randallia*) during the same period

... In 2013 we've trained or briefed 89 catch share observers and 20 non-catch share observers.



### For dipping sauce:

2T Black, rice wine, or white vinegar  
2T Soy sauce  
1T green onion  
1T ginger

## Name Games

**Feeling creative??** We are developing a new offline database. It needs a name. We're also hoping for a better name for this newsletter. If you have any suggestions for either project, please forward them to Rebecca at [rebecca.hoch@noaa.gov](mailto:rebecca.hoch@noaa.gov).