

The Private Life of the Tasty Scallop

By RICHARD H. CUNNINGHAM
Of The Telegram Editorial Staff

There are 300 species of scallops dwelling at the bottom of the seas. There are scallops in all the oceans and in all the latitudes.

But for scallop lovers and for the New England fishermen who fill the scallop-lover's plate, there are only two — the tender sweet bay scallop and the firmer, but still succulent, sea scallop.

The relatively tiny bay scallop lives his normal 20-month life span in the sheltered salt ponds and estuaries of the Atlantic coast, usually in the warmer waters of the Cape area.

He is the scallop of the gourmet and, when obtainable in season from Oct. 1 to April 1, is far more expensive to buy than is the sea scallop. That is because he is not only scarce, but he is protected by state and local laws strictly limiting the number of bushels of bay scallops which may be dredged.

At Georges Bank

The lusty sea scallop — the hardy fellow usually served in restaurants — lives his normal 20-year life span among millions of his species deep in the ocean at Georges Bank, the frigid North Atlantic fishing grounds east of Halifax.

This scallop knows no season, is wholly unprotected from the fishermen's dredge, and is served up at the rate of 20 million pounds a year at a price largely determined over the auction blocks at the New Bedford waterfront.

The 90 scallop vessels of New Bedford, each with a crew of eight to 10 men, dredge up about 16 million pounds of sea scallops a year, or roughly 85 per cent of American consumption of the sea food. Such vessels as the Nancy Jane, the Sea Ranger and the Porpoise sail regularly to Georges Bank from New Bedford to make the old 19th century whaling city the scallop capital of the 20th century.

Oversupply

Sea scallops won headlines this week when the New Bedford fishermen urged housewives to eat more of them during a period of rapidly declining prices. The unexpected discovery of three new scallop

SEA SCALLOPS

