

ropecordNEWS

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Battle Against Invasive Asian Carp Continues

As anglers begin their spring migration to the Illinois River to fish for sauger and walleye, scientists and fishermen are pondering the impact of the voracious invasive Asian carp on the nationally renowned fishery.

The term "Asian carp" refers to three species of fish - silver carp, bighead carp and black carp. Some can grow to more than 100 pounds. Smaller silver carp also jump from the water at passing boats.

The carp were brought to America to clean rearing ponds used to raise commercial catfish, and as a potential food source themselves. They escaped accidentally into the Mississippi River and have been swimming upstream ever since. They spawn in huge numbers and infest tributaries of the Mississippi, including the Missouri and Illinois rivers. They compete with game fish for microscopic plankton, the foundation of the river's food chain.

Officials from the federal government and states bordering the Great Lakes have hustled to keep the carp from reaching Lake Michigan and harming the sport fishery valued at several billion dollars each year. Two electric fish barriers are in place near Romeoville and a third one is planned this year. Admittedly, the efforts may be too late. Sophisticated tests recently detected Asian carp DNA in a harbor in Lake Michigan.

Meanwhile, Illinois River anglers who have coped with the Asian carp for several years are frustrated.

"We've been preaching (about the Asian carp menace) for six years," said Bill Guerrini, executive director of the Spring Valley Walleye Club that hosted the 24th annual Masters Walleye Circuit opener March 27-28. "Unfortunately, the powers-that-be don't pay attention until the horse is almost out of the barn."

In spring and to a lesser extent in fall, the river from Henry to Starved Rock State Park at Utica is a top destination for sauger that average 2 to 3 pounds. Some larger walleyes are mixed in. The FLW Walleye Tour, another major national event, was at Spring Valley April 29-May 1. Local anglers also enjoy fishing for the river's catfish and white bass. Largemouth bass are popular farther downstream from Peoria to the Mississippi River.

In addition to the concern about plankton, scientists are worried about the carps' impact on gizzard shad that survive on plankton their entire lives. Shad average from 3 to 5 inches in length and are high on the menu of larger game fish and Bald eagles. Greg Sass, director of the Illinois Natural History Survey's Illinois River Biological Station in Havana, said shad appear skinnier since Asian carp arrived in about 2000. However, Sass noted the Illinois River should have enough plankton to go around "for now."

"There could be many factors leading to lower numbers of gizzard shad," Sass said. "Gizzard shad are notorious for being boom or bust fish as far as spawning. As a fisheries biologist, it is just too early to tell if this observation is something to worry about, but I assure you that we are keeping an eye on it."

Indeed, John Chick, who directs the state's Great Rivers Field Station near Brighton, was planning to publish a scientific paper to document a 15-year decline in gizzard shad on the lower Illinois River. But shad numbers rebounded dramatically and unexpectedly. Chick agreed a clear trend could take years to see.

Sass said a temporary decline in shad could be caused by the fact more shad-eating sauger and other game fish are present in the river than usual. Game fish thrive when high-water occurs during and after spawning and that's been the case for the past several years.

Guerrini and Bob Kidd, executive director of the Illinois Walleye Trail, confirmed sauger are numerous. Kidd said catches of 60 to 70 fish a day are possible. But many of the fish are small. The lack of larger sauger is beginning to raise eyebrows. In 2005, a two-day total for 10 fish of 34.7 pounds was needed to win the MWC. Since then, average winning weight has declined to as little as 25 to 27 pounds.

"Is that directly related to the decline in gizzard shad? Hard to say, but we aren't seeing the numbers of larger fish as in past years," Guerrini said.

As officials debate how to keep the carp out of the Great Lakes, Illinois River anglers are more interested in answers closer to home. They hope the carp will wind up

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Battle Against Invasive Asian Carp Continues

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competing with each other to the point their numbers crash on their own and they find a balance with other fish species in the river.

“Mother nature is the best controller,” Guerrini said.

Finding commercial uses for the fish is another option, including turning the carp into fish patties, fertilizer and fish oil.

“We have hope. We always keep our chin up and look to the future,” Guerrini said.

Article Written by: Scott Richardson, *The Pantagraph*, Bloomington, Illinois (March 20, 2010)

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COAST GUARD SPONSORED SONS 2010

The U.S. Coast Guard and 50 other federal, state and commercial organizations concluded the two day triennial Spill of National Significance Exercise or SONS 2010 exercise in Portland, Maine.

SONS 2010 was a full-scale exercise designed to test response to a Spill of National Significance (SONS). A SONS is defined as a spill that due to its severity, size, location, complexity or impact requires extraordinary coordination of federal, state, local, and responsible party resources to contain and clean up.

This year's exercise simulated a 2.3 million gallon crude oil spill in the Gulf of Maine that had potential to impact an area of 500 miles in the coastal region along with other complications designed to challenge the joint response effort. More than 600 participants from 50 agencies were asked to coordinate planning, communication, and resources to protect the New England coastline from the simulated oil spill. The drill was especially important for the city of Portland because Portland is the second largest oil port on the East Coast.

"The SONS exercise is the Super Bowl of response exercises," said Capt. Jim McPherson, The Sector Northern New England commander. "An oil spill of this magnitude requires preparation, practice and synergy from all federal, state and local and private organizations. This exercise has been invaluable in terms of the benefits that all the participants received from the experience. Most importantly, the maritime community and ecosystem will benefit from our preparation."

The majority of the exercise players were located at the Unified Command Post in the Holiday Inn in Portland, but environmental response teams were stationed throughout the region. A mock registration center for volunteers was set up at the Maine Fish and Wildlife Rehab Center in Portland and Coast Guard, Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services' crews responded on the water deploying state-of-the-art oil recovery systems.

Vice President of Shell Oil Products U.S., Tom Smith, said, "Shell Oil Company was thrilled to participate in the SONS 2010 exercise. The safety of people and the environment have always been our main objective for Shell operations around the world. In an emergency response, protecting people and minimizing any environmental damage remain top priority for us. Participating in drills such as SONS 2010 also allows Shell to test new technologies and equipment that could be used in an actual incident."



"Maine comes out a real winner here by having the SONS exercise based in Portland. The planning we've been doing for a year and a half now and the exercise itself really increase our preparedness for a large marine oil spill," said Barbara Parker, Maine DEP's Director of Emergency Response.

The SONS exercise commenced on the 21st anniversary of the Exxon Valdez. The Exxon Valdez oil spill was the catalyst for the passing of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90) and is the primary law governing oil spill response efforts and places responsibility for dealing with an oil spill. Exercises such as SONS is mandatory for federal, state and local agencies.

"This exercise was a tremendous learning opportunity," said Rick Berry, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Spill Response Coordinator. "The lessons learned and the relationships forged between the participants will greatly enhance our response capabilities."

SONS 2010 is a Coast Guard-sponsored Department of Homeland Security Tier II exercise on the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program five-year calendar. This exercise involved more than 600 representatives from a variety of federal, state, local, tribal and private organizations.

Source: WorkBoat (March 22, 2010)

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MAGNETOMETERS AID PANAMA CANAL EXPANSION

Almost a hundred years after the Panama Canal was first opened, a major expansion project is currently underway. The 50 mile passageway was originally designed to accommodate vessels up to 965 feet long, 106 feet wide, with a maximum draft of 39 feet. Today a new generation of megaships is making the canal obsolete. From freighters to cruise ships, vessels greater than 1,000 feet in length are common. To handle these larger hulls, a seven year development program has begun that will add a third lane to accept ships up to 1,200 feet long, 160 feet wide, with drafts up to 50 feet.

The massive project, expected to cost in excess of \$5 billion, involves constructing new locks, miles of new waterways, and deepening and widening some existing passageways. On shore, giant earth movers are busy excavating a new path for the ships, while at sea, huge dredges are working to increase the size and depth of the channels. Once complete, here's how the reconstructed canal will operate. A megaship traveling from west to east will enter on the Pacific side and head up a long channel into new locks. The vessel will be lifted 85 feet to a newly constructed passageway next to the existing locks. The old and new waterways will merge into one that has been widened and deepened for the bigger boats. Five miles beyond, the ship will enter a man made lake where it will pass through a 45 mile long expanded navigation channel. On the other side of the lake, it will pass through another brand new set of locks, then travel two more miles before exiting the canal into the Atlantic. The entire process will take about 10 hours.

The expansion project is yielding some interesting "artifacts". A number of railroad wheels and a dredge bucket dating to the early 20th century were recently uncovered. Encountering this debris during dredging operations can dramatically impede progress, and equipment can be damaged running into these underground obstructions. To counter the problem, officials at the Panama Canal Authority have brought in two of JW Fishers Proton 4 magnetometers. These super sensitive metal detectors can locate large iron and steel targets at a range of hundreds of meters. Before excavating an area, a team surveys the sector with the magnetometer. If any ferrous metal objects are buried there, the Proton 4 will sound an alarm and show a change in the readout. Tracker software allows the mag data and GPS coordinates to be displayed and stored on a laptop. On the computer screen the mag operator can see the

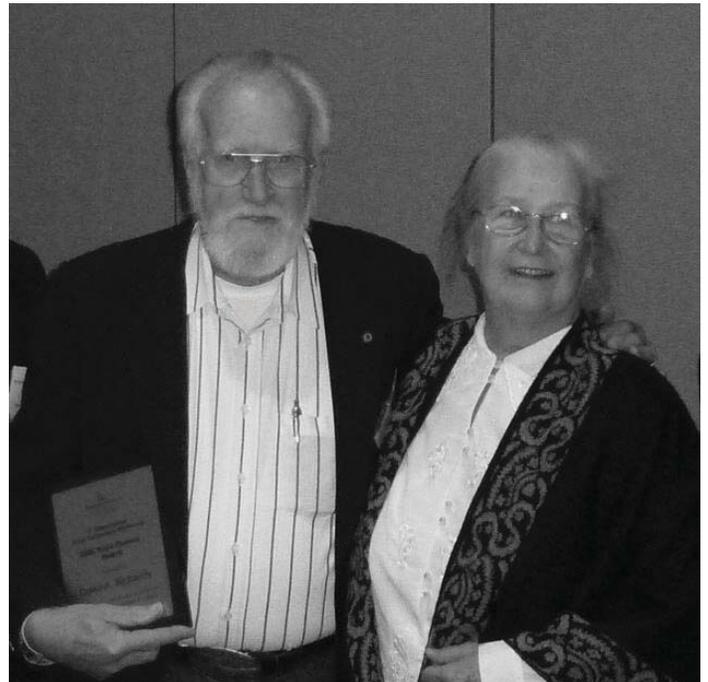
track of the survey boat as it moves over the search area to ensure no part is missed. Once the survey is complete, the team can quickly relocate the metal targets and remove them before dredging operations begin. Armed with the new equipment, authorities are confident the project will progress according to schedule and be finished on time.

For more information on the canal expansion project, go to www.panacanal.com. For more information on Fishers complete line of underwater search equipment, go to www.jwfishers.com

Source: Ocean E-News Ocean News Magazine (April 2010)

DAVID RICHARDS RECEIVES THE ROPE PIONEER AWARD

David Richards received the Rope Pioneer Award at the 8th International Rope Technology Workshop (IRTW). Dave received this award for his many years of service to the rope industry. After serving in the US Coast Guard, he worked for a number of rope manufacturers and distributors, including Samson and Wellington. He founded Southwest Ocean Services in Houston in 1985 and is now their test engineer. He is also Technical Director for the Cordage Institute. The IRTW was organized by the Ropes and Tension Members Committee of the Marine Technology Society and was held in Galveston, TX in December.



David and Barbara Richards

IMPORTANT EVENTS

Eurocord

June 26-30, 2010
Dubrovnik Palace Hotel
Dubrovnik, Croatia
www.eurocord.com

Oceans '10 MTS/IEEE Conference

September 20-23, 2010
Washington State Convention
and Trade Center
Seattle, WA
www.oceans10mtsieeseattle.org

Web Sling and Tie Down Association Fall Meeting

October 19-21, 2010
Hilton Fort Worth
Fort Worth, TX
www.wstda.com

Associated Wire Rope Fabricators Fall General Meeting

October 24-27, 2010
The Grove Park Inn
Asheville, NC
www.awrf.org

International WorkBoat Show

December 1-3, 2010
Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, LA
www.workboatshow.com

Cordage Institute

May 11-13, 2011
Hyatt Regency Coconut Point
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www.cordageinstitute.com

OCEANS 2010 CALL FOR PAPERS

This years OCEANS Conference will be held in Seattle on September 20 to 23. Full information on the conference can be found on the web site at www.oceans10mtsieeseattle.org.

The web site opened for submitting abstracts for technical papers and student papers on March 15. The deadline for submitting abstracts is May 15. The final paper must be submitted by August 15.

As at past OCEANS Conferences, the Ropes and Tension Members Committee of MTS will sponsor one of several sessions on Rope Technology at this conference. Take this opportunity to present and publish your technical paper. The published paper is a form of recognition. It will be read and referred to by many others. And it is good publicity for yourself and your company.

For more information on the technical programs which will be offered at the OCEANS 2010 Conference, contact dmartin@apl.washington.edu or dahl@apl.washington.edu. For more information on the Ropes and Tension Members Committee, contact MTS-Ropes@ATT.net.

MTS ROPES COMMITTEE PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PAPERS AT OCEANS 2010

The MTS Ropes and Tension Members (R&TM) Committee provided an \$800 stipend to a student from the University of Washington so he could attend and present his paper on rope technology at last year's OCEANS Conference in Biloxi. The committee intends to continue this practice and will offer up to three student paper stipends this year.

Student authors of OCEANS 2010 technical papers which are related to ropes and tension members may receive one of the stipends from the R&TM committee. The student does not need to be a member of MTS. If there are more than three eligible student papers, the R&TM Committee officers will judge and select the three recipients.

Information on how to submit abstracts is given in the above article. The student must enter Ropes and Tension Members as one of their papers interest areas in order to qualify. For further information, contact MTS-Ropes@ATT.net.

9TH INTERNATIONAL ROPE TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP CALL FOR PAPER ABSTRACTS

The 9th International Rope Technology Workshop (IRTW) will be held at Texas A&M in March 2011. The MTS Ropes and Tension Members (R&TM) Committee is planning this workshop together with OIPEEC (the International Organization for the Study of the Endurance of Ropes).

This combination conference and workshop will feature published papers as well as unpublished presentations. Abstracts for published papers should now be submitted to conference2011@OIPEEC.org. The deadline for submitting paper abstracts is May 31.

An opportunity to submit abstracts for unpublished presentations will be provided later. For more information on the 2011 IRTW and to offer your services in planning, contact MTS-Ropes@ATT.net.

MIAMI CORDAGE PROFILED IN FLORIDA SMALL BUSINESS MAGAZINE

Kandi Stirman's family business, Miami Cordage, has been manufacturing soft rope, wire rope, chain and synthetic webbing since 1960. The products are used in the marine, aircraft and building industries and are made in south Florida. Miami Cordage sells its rope and wire across the U.S. and Latin America.

In recent years, much of the company's focus has been government contracting. While the company counts the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy and NASA as clients, learning the ins and outs of government procurement has been a challenge. Says Stirman, "It's a lot of networking."

Florida's online MyFloridaMarketPlace makes finding contracts easier, but Stirman warns other small businesses that there is still a tremendous amount of legwork that goes into sifting through potential projects, working with prime contractors and, if applicable, getting certified as a minority-owned business. "It's easier than it used to be," she says, adding, "At least there is something to look at on the computer."

Stirman says that rope and many other specialized products typically are not mentioned in requests for proposal even though the items must be used by prime contractors to complete the work. She calls them "hidden products" and says that to participate in a contract, she has to figure out

who might be bidding and then arrange to work with them as a subcontractor.

Stirman's company is an attractive partner for prime contractors because, as a women-owned business, it has state certification as a minority business enterprise, or MBE. Some municipalities accept Florida's MBE certification, but other localities and agencies, such as the South Florida Water Management District, have their own programs. There's an ongoing stream of paperwork, says Stirman, who is currently working on getting federal certification as an 8(a) disadvantaged business because of her location in an Historically Underutilized Business Zone, or HUBZone.

Stirman's latest frustration is that many government agencies have no qualms about buying from overseas suppliers rather than at home. One exception was the 2009 federal economic stimulus legislation that required using U.S. suppliers.

Source: Florida Small Business Magazine (March 1, 2010)



Kandi Stirman, Miami Cordage

GLADDING BRAID ANNOUNCES CABLE ARMOURING EXPANSION

Gladding Braided Products' recently expanded 85,000 sq foot manufacturing plant is well-equipped to handle all cable protection needs: from aerospace thermal and EMC protection; automotive and electronics corrosion and abrasion protection; to armored and shielded cables, Gladding is here to help. Gladding also offers raw materials and bobbin sales to companies that do their own braided assemblies. If you're interested in entering this market in any capacity, Gladding can help.

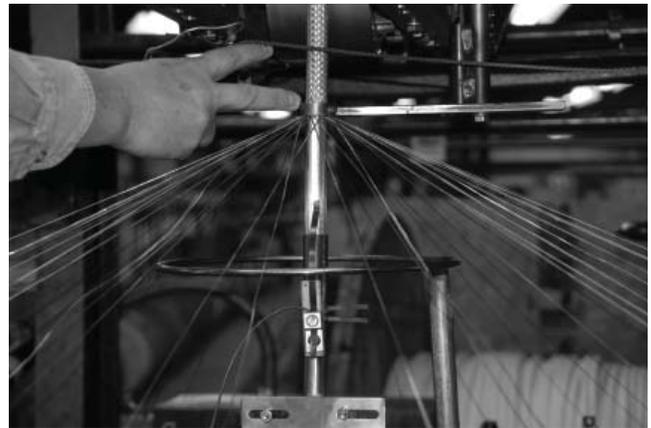
"We allow companies of all types to enter into the armored cable business," explained Sparky Christakos, Gladding President. "We have years of expertise manufacturing shielded cables and assemblies. We engineer and build harness braiding machines from raw steel, as well as purchasing used braiding equipment, rebuild, refurbish and make them suitable for harness work. We save costs and simplify processes at every step of the way."

Gladding's unique harness braiding system provides a protective casing over a core set of wires. The core (hose, ground wire, fuel line, or electrical harness, etc) is covered with a braided protective material. Gladding can supply the finished harness, the raw materials (textile coverings such as nylon, polyester, Nomex, Kevlar, Fiberglass, PTFE, VN-4000S; and wire materials such as stainless steel, copper, bronze, aluminum), and the braiding machinery to apply the shield.

The diameter of the core wires or harness will determine the size of the braiding machine needed: a 1/4" harness may use a 16 carrier machine, a 1" diameter harness might require a 32 carrier machine, etc. Gladding supplies machines for all sizes. With a machine purchase, Gladding gives training at their factory as well. "The skill of the operator is of utmost importance," Christakos added.

Located in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains in Central New York State, Gladding Braided Products is a family-owned and operated business, offering bobbin winding services, harness braiding, overbraiding, buss wire, military spec. braids (wire & textile), raw materials, and production machinery sales.

For more information on services and products, visit the Gladding website: www.gladdingbraid.com or call 315.653.7211.



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