

THE SHELLFISH NETWORK
NEWSLETTER, SPRING 2009

NO 51

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Aims: 1) To increase public awareness of the fact that shellfish are living creatures capable of experiencing pain and stress.

2) To stop the cruelty involved in, and eventually to bring an end to, the slaughter of shellfish for human consumption and other abuses.



JOE SOLOMON 1933-2009

Many of you will have heard that our Founder, Joe Solomon, died in March. This newsletter is dedicated to him and the wonderful work he did for the shellfish.

Joe was a compassionate, kind and gentle man who was committed to the cause of animal welfare. He never complained about his own problems but was always more concerned about how the campaigns for animal welfare were progressing.

It is often said that 'animal lovers' only care about big-eyed, cuddly, furry creatures. Well, Joe's main concern was for shellfish. I have never seen a cuddly, furry lobster, but he knew that they can suffer pain and stress and experience pleasure just like any pet cat or dog.

In spite of the fact that he must have been suffering himself, he still found time only a few weeks ago to organise a Burns Night and to see that the proceeds went to the Shellfish Network, which he founded in 1994. I have the privilege of continuing that work as best I can, but I know that the world needs a lot more Joe Solomons – and so we

thank God for and celebrate his life here today. Julie.



Joe
CUSTASTUN

You will all be aware of how lobsters, crabs and most shellfish are killed at present! Boiling, cutting up alive, eating alive from the shell etc.etc. And it looks as if the eating of shellfish (along with all other sentient beings except humans) will carry on into the distant future unless there is a cataclysmic change of attitude amongst people. We, of course, want all killing to stop, but, while it still goes on, we have to make sure that there is absolutely *no* suffering involved. Well, Simon and Charlotte Buckhaven have spent the last ten years working on this machine which ensures that shellfish are stunned insensible in half a second and then killed in a few seconds – no suffering or stress. The Crustastun is a box with saline fluid in the bottom on which rests a pad. The animal is put on the pad in the solution, the lid closed and a button pressed. That's it. No thrashing around, no trying to get away, no pain and no stress. A great many cooks and some supermarkets are keen to purchase one of these as one chef told me: 'No one really likes to take the life of a creature, but at least this takes away the necessity of killing it in a horrific fashion.' So, however we may feel about the killing, it really is not about us, but about the suffering involved in the present methods of slaughter. So, well done, Simon and Charlotte and Brakesgroup Catering Division who are promoting it. Perhaps the fact that it has now been proved that crabs and lobsters feel pain, (see below), people will stop to think before tickling their jaded palates with animals which have been killed simply for their delectation! And by seeing the Crustastun, and the concern of many chefs, hopefully it will bring to their attention this fact and make them think twice about what they are eating. (But don't hold your breath!) The next step is to make the Crustastun mandatory so that there can be no selling

of live animals to the public, who will not have this machine. We live in hope! Julie

PAIN IN CRABS AND LOBSTERS

A study carried out by Professor Bob Elwood and Mirjam Appel from the School of Biological Sciences at Queen's University, Belfast, has proved that crabs can feel pain. They used hermit crabs, and delivered electric shocks to wires attached to their shells. Only the crabs that received shocks vacated their shells during the experiment, indicating that what they had experienced was unpleasant. Obviously this was only a small shock, not enough to stun them or kill them. They also showed that the crabs remembered less powerful shocks and moved home when the opportunity arose. Crabs who had not received shocks were less likely to switch homes. Professor Elwood said: 'There has been a long debate about whether crustaceans including crabs, prawns and lobsters feel pain...this research demonstrates that it is not a simple reflex but that crabs trade-off their need for a quality shell with the need to avoid the harmful stimulus. Such trade-offs are seen in vertebrates in which the response to pain is controlled with respect to other requirements. Trade-offs of this type have not been previously demonstrated in crustaceans. The results are consistent with the idea of pain being experienced by these animals.'

Source: *Yahoo news 27. 3. 09 and various others.* (Professor Elwood was good enough to send me his published papers on this work. Ed.)

+ Wroclaw, Poland, April 6 Spanish actor and director Rodrigo Garcia was accused of torturing, killing and eating a lobster. He hanged the lobster on a string, stabbed it with a sharp object and waited for it to die slowly as 150 spectators listened to the heartbeats of the dying animal displayed on an amplifier, said a report. Garcia performed a similar play with a hamster the next day, by drowning it. He dubbed this 'performance' 'Accidents:Killing for Food, and called it artistic. Garcia was taken to court in Poland and charged.

Source: *www.upi.com News Articles 7. 4. 09*

+A crayfish 3ft long and weighing almost a stone has been found in the English Channel, far from its normal habitat off Scotland. It is thought to be about 50 years old and caught five miles off Portland, Dorset. These creatures, known as crawfish or spiny lobsters, have not been caught in the Channel for 10 years. Martin Foley took it to the Sea Life Centre in Weymouth. The animal is to be

known as Crawford. Source: *Daily Telegraph, 2. 4. 09*



+And an article in the *Sunday Times, 11. 1. 09* says George a lobster, who weighs 20lb and is 80 years old, has been liberated from a New York restaurant on animals rights grounds!

ALL THE LITTLE ONES

A small marine creature which resembles a woodlouse, may provide the key to a major breakthrough for biofuels in Britain. It is called a gribble and it bores into the planks of boats and the pillars of piers and eats them. This wood-consuming technique may be adapted by scientists to turn wood into sustainable motor fuel on a vast scale. The four-spot gribble or *Limnoria quadripunctata*, is one of the key elements of Britain's biggest-ever publicly-funded bioenergy research programme. A total of £27m is to be spent over five years in creating so-called 'second generation' biofuels which are much more efficient and environmentally friendly than the present one which are largely manufactured from food crops. The second generation compounds will be derived from non-food plant material, mainly plant waste such as straw and wood and if they isolate the enzymes the gribble uses to extract the nutritious sugars from wood (from which biofuels such as ethanol can be made), scientists may be able to make the process much more efficient. Source: *Independent 28. 1. 09*

+Vivienne Vick is working hard to find out why a lake full of what appear to be Swan Clams has been dredged at Llandrindod Wells. Many of these clams are probably years old, and have been left to die. Was this dredging legal? Did the Council responsible know or find out whether the clams could first be saved? Apparently the lake also contains rare fish and it does not look at present as though the dredging was done responsibly. Viv. is hoping to find the answers to all these questions soon.

+ A delightful picture in the *Daily Tel. 8. 1. 09* shows a piglet squid with a smile on its face. The squids' bodies are almost completely clear and they have a rotund shape and tufts of bristle-like tentacles, and they are normally found more than 320ft below the surface of the ocean. The species, *helicocranchia pfefferi* is also noted for the light-

producing organs known as photophores located beneath each of its large eyes. The unusual pattern of skin pigmentation on this particular squid makes it appear as though it were permanently smiling. (It really is quite cute! Ed).

+ An ad. In the *Telegraph Weekend* 22.11.08 shows cultured freshwater pearls in a necklace. Now, as far as I know, cultured pearls are made by placing something foreign in the shell of the mussels or oysters to copy the pieces of grit which sometimes get caught naturally within the shells. Freshwater mussels are protected and may not be fished. I wonder how these were made? Ed.

+Scientists have grown jellyfish in a lab. so that they can study the patterns they use to search for food that they cannot see in the oceans. *Source: Daily Tel.* 3. 2. 09 (This little article does not make clear who studies the patterns or who cannot see in the oceans! I would love it if it were the jellyfish studying the scientists, but, hey-ho, that's just my wishful thinking! Ed).



+Scottish west coast prawn fisheries and other species fishing have been saved from closure but fishermen are facing tough new conservation challenges following the deal struck in Brussels. *Source: Aberdeen Press & Journal* 20. 12. 08

+ Scottish oyster growers prepared for a busy Christmas as oysters are being considered as the alternative Christmas starter. *Source: P & J* 11. 12. 08

+ Consumers should see the Soil Association organic logo on farmed shellfish such as mussels, scallops, oysters and clams. In response to increasing demand from the shellfish growers, the Soil Association has developed an organic standard for the certification of bivalve shellfish production. *Source: P & J* 13. 6. 07 (I have to say I find it strange that these people are called 'shellfish growers'. While I am aware that many small shellfish do grow in strings or ropes, they grow as nature made them. They were not created by the 'growers' and are tiny beings, whether organic or not. I am sure the bivalves are delighted to know that they are organic and have a logo from the famous SA! Ed.)

+A carnivorous sea squirt and ocean-dwelling spiders were among dozens of species discovered in previously unexplored Australian waters, scientists have said. Lead researcher, Ron Thresher said, 'Our sampling documented the deepest known

Australian fauna, including a bizarre carnivorous sea squirt, sea spiders and giant sponges, and previously unknown marine communities dominated by gooseneck barnacles and millions of round, purple-spotted sea anemones.' Mr Thresher said samples would provide ancient climate data for use in global warming projections. *Source: Daily Tel.* 19. 1. 09



+Heston Blumenthal's restaurant has re-opened, but without any shellfish dishes. The restaurant, called the Fat duck, was at the centre of a food poisoning alert and will no longer be having shellfish such as oysters, langoustines, mussels and other shellfish on its menu. These animals are notorious for causing food poisoning and will remain off the menu until the Government health watchdog has concluded its nine-day investigation. *Source: Ind.* 12. 3. 09 (I don't know if that investigation has concluded or whether it has allowed the return of these shellfish to the table. The secret is to eat something else! Ed).

+Because fish stocks are dwindling, it seems that numbers of jellyfish are on the rise as they are the natural food for fish such as tuna, marlin and swordfish. Simon Usborne reports in the *Ind.* 9. 4. 09 with a heading 'Jellyfish and chips, anyone?' and goes on to say, 'Squid sausages, algae burgers – they could soon be on the menu if we really want to save the planet. But can we stomach them?' (Why do we need to eat squid? Algae, seaweed, fungae, plants – all good stuff. Ed.)

+ Members will be happy to know that The Nature Conservation USA is working on shellfish restoration work and marine conservation. They say: 'Given their multi-faceted role within nearshore marine systems, the conservation and restoration of bivalves is emerging as a priority for state and federal agencies as well as the conservation community in general. (I have their full mission paper if anyone would like to see it. It is very comprehensive. Ed.)

SCIENCE

+ Google Earth allows web users to go on a virtual tour of the oceans with thousands of images of underwater landscapes. Users will be able to explore underwater volcanoes, watch videos about marine life and read about shipwrecks. *Source: Daily Tel.* 3. 2. 09

+It is the Southampton scientists who have helped Google to reveal footage of the sea and the oceans

around Europe . The researchers are from the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) who supplied the data. Source: Southampton Echo, 11. 2. 09

+And emissions are halting the growth of coral reefs which are the 'rainforests' of the sea. They provide food and shelter for millions of marine creatures. But the Great Barrier Reef, the largest and best-known in the world, is growing at its slowest rate for 400 years. Corals, which absorb calcium from the sea, grow in yearly cycles and scientists can measure their annual growth using x-rays. Prof. Glenn De'ath, who carried out the research at the Australian Institute of Marine Science, believes that the increased acidification of the sea due to the absorption of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is the main culprit. Source: *Daily Tel*: 2. 1. 09



+ A 5ft long, battery-powered mechanical fish has been developed by the robotics team at the Univ. of Essex. The robot uses a fishy, rippling movement to swim at 2mph, has navigation software and will return to an offshore recharging stations once a day. While docked, it will upload information on pollutants in the water obtained from its chemical sensors, which are sensitive enough to detect a small leak in a single vessel. Five fish are now being built by Professor Huosheng Ju of the Univ's School of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering, at a cost of £20,000 each. The plan is to release them into the waters of Gijon in northern Spain next year. Local anglers have yet to be notified. Source: *Sunday Times* 22. 3. 09 (Love to see their faces when they net this little beauty! Ed.) +Sally Churchward describes some of the fish that can be seen in the Portsmouth Blue Reef Aquarium. I do consider aquaria to be water zoos even though this one allows huge areas for the fish to swim in. They are still being kept in water 'cages' and if it is not possible to see these animals any other way, well – tough! Source: *S'hampston Daily Echo* 21. 11. 008

POLLUTION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

+A study suggests that pumping iron into the oceans could help to reduce global warming. The nutrient leads to algae blooms which help to suck up carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and take it to the sea floor. The report, published in *Nature* magazine, found that natural iron fertilisation from volcanic islands in the Southern Ocean increased

algae blooms two to threefold, but researchers say experiments must be carried out to test any effects on marine life. Source: *Daily Tel*. 21. 1. 09 +*The Sunday Times Mag.* 8. 3. 09, also discusses acid seas. The article states 'What we have to mourn are tiny marine organisms dissolving in acidified water.' In fact we need to save them. These plankton tell us that the chemistry of the oceans is changing and that unless we act decisively, the limitless abundance of the sea within a very few decades will degrade into a useless tidal desert.

The species most directly at risk are plankton, corals, sea snails, barnacles and various other creatures. But now it is understood that the clownfish, featured in Disney's cartoon 'Finding Nemo' is being affected. The American academic journal '*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*' carried a paper in February, entitled '*Ocean acidification impairs olfactory discrimination and homing ability of a marine fish*'. In other words, the clownfish larvae in acidified water were unable to detect the odours from adult fish that led them to their breeding sites. If fish don't breed, the species will not survive and what is true for one species must be true for others.

On average, each person on the planet contributes a tonne of carbon to the oceans every year. CO₂ reacts with sea water to make carbonic acid. Since 1800 humans have generated 240 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide, half of which has been absorbed by the sea. The rapid rise in acidity means that marine animals will be unable to grow shells, and many sea plants will not survive. With these crucial links removed, death could flow all the way up the food chain, through tuna and cod to marine mammals and eventually *Homo sapiens*.

+*The Southern Daily Echo* 10. 12. 08, discusses the story of our coast and says it is one of constant change. For centuries wildlife has been able to adapt and move but modern urban growth is presenting new and much greater challenges, the article says. The 5,000-year period at the end of the most recent Ice Age saw the Solent estuaries grow from what had once been a branch of the River Rhine. Recent archaeological studies have found remains of many cultures on the bed of the Solent. In the absence of sea walls, buildings or modern farming landscapes, wildlife is perfectly capable of moving to adapt to the changing coast. But examples of the natural transitions with sea levels rising and land falling are now very rare. An example of this problem is shown in the dwarf spike-rush which is very small and lacks either striking leaves or flowers. The original colony was

destroyed when the marshes, where tidal salt mixes with fresh water, were converted into the town's saltwater swimming pool.

The natural ebb and flow of wildlife becomes more difficult when the landscape is broken up into fragments by intensive farming, forestry and our towns and cities. Species that are not fussy about habitats and are highly mobile will do well. Species that have poor means of dispersal and need a particular niche to live in will suffer.

However, in the same paper, another article explains that paintings, water colours and engravings of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight coastline are being used to help scientists better understand the threat of rising sea levels and climate change. Dr Robin McInnes, who runs Isle of Wight-based consultancy Coastal and Geotechnical Services, had the idea to combine his love of art and geography to test his theory that planners could learn a lot about coastal evolution over the centuries by examining art.

+Britain's environmental movement has been presented with a stark choice: whether or not to support the world's largest-ever renewable energy project which will result in unprecedented ecological damage to one of our most important natural habitats. The giant £20bn Severn barrage, which would stretch 10 miles from Lavernock Point near Cardiff to Brean Down near Weston-super-Mare would harness the tides to generate up to 5% of the UK's electricity needs and the equivalent of eight typical coal-fired power stations. But this barrage would destroy vast areas of mudflats and marshes, which are vital feeding grounds for tens of thousands of wading birds, and would prevent migratory fish from ascending rivers to spawn. Other environmentalists think such a large project would divert resources away from other key renewable technologies such as wind power. The barrage will be the subject of a public consultation and a final decision will be taken by 2010. *Source: Ind. 27. 1. 09* (I never understand why everything has to be so big! Britain is a land of rivers and waterfalls, often in highly built-up urban areas and I see no reason why each waterfall can't be harnessed to produce electricity. We have a wonderful little one near where I live and it lights many houses. And it looks charming! Surely there are large areas which can be used and which will not destroy wildlife grounds? Ed.)

+Sea levels are predicted to rise twice as fast as was forecast by the UN only two years ago, threatening hundreds of millions of people with catastrophe, scientists have said in a dramatic new warning about climate change. Rapidly melting ice sheets in

Greenland and Antarctica are likely to push up sea levels by a metre or more by 2100, swamping coastal cities and obliterating the living space of 600million people who live in deltas, low-lying areas and small island states. *Source: Ind. 11. 3. 09* +And to continue the gloomy picture, in the *Ind. 13., 3. 09*, Lord Stern, the economist who produced the single most influential political document on climate change, says he underestimated the risks of global warming and the damage that could result from it.

CETACEANS



+The good news is that divers came to the rescue of a sperm whale trapped in fishing nets in the eastern Caribbean. The huge nets used by trawlers are one of the greatest threats the species faces after commercial hunting was banned in the mid-1980s. The whales can dive to depths of almost two miles but must return to the surface every 90 minutes to breathe. *Source: Daily Tel. 29. 1. 09*

+ The bad news is that Japanese whalers have been accused of attacking environmental protesters' boats with concussion grenades, water cannons and lumps of metal. Paul Watson, captain of the protest ship, said: 'It is a very dramatic scene out here as ships zigzag back and forth in thick ice and heavy swells. The whalers are deploying water cannons, concussion grenades, acoustic weapons and throwing solid brass and lead balls at Sea shepherd crew members. If we were to do any of the things [they] are doing we would be denounced as eco-terrorists.' *Source: Daily Tel. 3. 2. 09*

+Australian researchers have nicknamed dolphins the chefs of the sea after they discovered how the animals prepare cuttlefish to eat. They watched a wild Indo-Pacific bottlenose catch, drain off the ink then fillet a cuttlefish which she had flushed out of dense weeds. *Source: Ind. 31. 1. 09*



+ And dolphins have discovered a way of putting sea sponges on the end of their noses to protect them from sand when they try to uncover fish. Researchers found that it was used mostly by female dolphins because the males swim off to socialise rather than learning from their mothers. (Not much change there, then! Ed.) *Source: Daily Tel 5.1.09*

+ Research shows that older killer whales make better mothers and their calves have a much higher survival rate. Apparently giving birth to calves and then losing the ability to reproduce any more helps the mother to focus on bringing up her offspring without wasting energy on further pregnancies. The research was carried out by Eric Ward from the Northwest Fisheries Science Center, in Seattle, USA. Source: *Daily Tel* 3. 2. 09

+ It seems there is no end to what humans do unjustifiably. Now, in an article in the *Tel. Sport* 3. 12. 08, Kate Laven explains that 'crashing into whales at high speed in mid-ocean is a common occurrence for offshore racers. Briton Jonny Malbon, skipper of the Open 60 Artemis in the Vendee Globe solo round-the-world yacht race did just that. Malbon, said that the boat got off lightly, but the whale was not so lucky. He was devastated. 'There was a cauldron of mess,' he said. 'The whale was obviously in pain, but there was nothing I could do. It was horrible.' But it seems that dealing with these disasters provides yet another test of a solo skipper's mental strength, especially when there are still 19,000 miles to race. He added, 'Last night I was seething about it, but calmed down and decided there was no point getting upset. I could easily ruin the rest of this experience (sic) if I grumble, so I'm not going to dwell on it.' (I just bet the whale wishes him every success and will try not to slow down the racing boats in future! Ed.)

+ Another happy story. Rita, the manatee or sea cow who weighs a ton and a half, has spent the past 26 years living as a semi-invalid in Sea-world, the Florida theme park near Orlando, having lost a flipper. But a recent edict from the US fish and Wildlife Service has said that all manatees in captivity which are capable of living in the wild must be released, which means freedom for about 30 animals held in parks and zoos across the US. Staff at Sea World have determined that Rita will be capable of surviving without her flipper. Scott Gearhart, a senior Sea World vet said, 'With manatees, their food doesn't try and get away from them, so they don't have a lot of difficulty getting where they need to be. Rita was released into Blue Springs where a warm-water spring ensures the water temperature stays at 23 degrees all year round and is a major attraction for manatees from the main river in the winter. Source: *Ind.* 28. 2. 09

+But sadly, only about 54 of nearly 200 whales and seven bottlenose dolphins were able to be saved when they became stranded on King Island Tasmania. Local residents and wildlife workers used moist towels and buckets of water to keep the pilot whales alive on the beach before they could be

hauled back into the water. Source: *Sunday Times* 8. 3. 09

+However, an article in the *Ind.* 25. 3. 09, states that research has shown that most beached whales in Britain have fatal damage to their internal organs. A new policy, which will apply only to species such as the sperm, beaked and northern bottlenose will be to kill them by lethal injection rather than their being made to suffer as a result of doomed attempts to refloat them into the safety of deep water, marine experts have said. But dolphins and porpoises will not be put down unless found to be seriously ill. The new policy has the support of the RSPCA and the Marine Animals Rescue Coalition, which unanimously agreed to the decision after hearing evidence from scientists involved in a study of dozens of stranded whales over a four-year period.



+Animal Rights campaigners claim that a 'secret slaughter' of seals was being carried out by fish farmers around the Scottish coast. The Seal Protection Action Group said as many as 5,000 seals were shot every year. However, the industry claims the figure is nearer 500 (so that's all right then! Ed.) and insists that seals have to be controlled to protect commercial stocks. It is currently legal to shoot seals outside their breeding season when they are threatening fish farms. Common seal numbers have dropped in recent years and campaigners believe that the unofficial cull is one of the factors behind the decline.

Source: *Tel website.* 7. 4. 09

LAW

+The new Marine and Coastal Access Bill seeks to protect the UK's ocean wildlife with an extended network of 'marine conservation zones' by 2012. 'It will ensure clean healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, by putting in place better systems for delivering sustainable development of marine and coastal environment' (it says 'ere. Well, it was in the Queen's speech, so fingers crossed! At least it is being thought about seriously. Ed.) Source: *Southern Daily Echo* 4. 12. 08

+And news just in today, from *DEFRA* 20. 4. 09 The High level marine objectives articulate the outcomes sought by the UK Government and Devolved Administrations in the UK marine area. They also underpin the development of the joint Marine Policy Statement which is provided for in the Marine and Coastal Access Bill.

+EU PLEDGES SHARK PROTECTION MEASURES. The EU is promising to do more to protect sharks vulnerable to over fishing. The move, in the wake of a massive increase in EU shark catches to feed the Asian market, was hailed as final recognition of a species in serious danger. MEP Tory Struan Stevenson said the new shark conservation and management action plan was a positive step towards averting the risk of extinction for some shark types. He wants a total ban on some shark fishing and new controls on shark finning – where fishermen cut off a shark’s fin to serve the shark fin soup trade and throw the rest of the shark back, sometimes still alive. Source: *Ind. Tel. News*. 6. 2. 09

FISHING AND THE INDUSTRY

+One of our members said that he noticed that during an Iranian festival, goldfish were used as decoration . They disappeared at the end of the festival but he could not find out what happened to them. Does anyone know? Ed.

+In a news review from the *Southern Daily Echo*, 24. 1. 09, writer and former world shore champion Chris Clark describes leisure (sic) fishing as ‘an ancient art form passed down through generations.’ He says that it is the most popular ‘sport’ (my quote marks Ed.) in Britain, with an estimated 1.4 million people trying their luck. But new rules proposed by bureaucrats in Brussels pose a major threat to the future of fishing (yippee!!Ed.) and the livelihoods of charter skippers across the county. Every vessel that ever goes fishing would have to become registered and Jo Borg, European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, wants every fish to be counted as part of the quota British commercial trawlers can land. This even includes people fishing from beaches and piers. So skippers are warning that imposing a limit on fishing charters could put off customers. Clark says ‘It’s just going to add an awful lot of bureaucracy and not make one iota of difference to the fish stocks.’ (Well, if 1.4 million are catching the creatures, I don’t see how it won’t make a difference! It will certainly make a difference to each fish *not* caught. Of course, there is a huge outcry from the anglers and the *Echo* is full of it! Ed.)

+But the sad thing is that even little children are being taught to fish, and there is a picture of a small lad proudly holding up a beautiful flounder during a club fixture. He has his thumb in the poor creature’s mouth and is smiling happily. No one has explained to the little chap that what he has done is killed a living being simply to take part in some sort of competition. When will they ever learn. (Picture from *Echo*, 22. 1. 09)

+ Now here is something odd! From the *Aberdeen Press & Journal* 18. 2. 09: World Wildlife Fund (WWF) says there is no need for the European commission proposals to close grounds off Scotland’s west coast. The proposal is to rebuild white-fish stocks. But the WWF said it was vital to step up conservation measures in the area to allow vital (sic) fisheries to stay open, while protecting stocks of haddock and whiting. Lib Dem. Fisheries spokesman Liam McArthur wants Fisheries Minister Richard Lochhead to recognise the proposal at end-of-year fish quota talks in Brussels could have on other coastal communities. WWF added that specially adapted prawn nets and by-catch quotas could all help to achieve conservation aims. WWF Scotland marine policy officer Louize Hill said ‘Adopting all the measures proposed by WWF would allow this fishery to remain open, ensure the protection of white-fish stocks and allow the fishery to become more sustainable.’ (Now I thought WWF cared about all creatures. Does she mean sustaining the fish to live, or to be raised in the fishery? Puzzling! Ed.)

+Now it seems that due to the EU rules, fishermen are being forced to throw away millions of tons of fish because quotas govern the amount of their catch that can be landed. Five million dead cod have been dumped in the North Sea because of quotas in the past three years. (Now I would have thought that not going out quite so often would solve most of this problem. Fishermen must know how much they catch at one go in general so it is hardly the fault of the EU! I don’t believe it is impossible to judge how much is caught in a single fishing trip. Ed.) Source: *Sunday Express* 16. 11. 08

+This is nasty! German tax exile Hans Raab has constructed an aquaculture factory in east Switzerland, which was designed to produce 1800 tons of fish a year. Last year Raab began to produce African catfish and to sell it under the name ‘Melander’. The Swiss fish welfare organization ‘fair-fish’ had serious doubts about the keeping of the fish in this factory. Then in March, Raab came under fire because of the way he kills the fish. Swiss Animal Protection Law makes precise prescription about stunning and killing of fish, but Raab’s factory fish are cooled and then centrifuged together with ice, where they die after 20 minutes. After trying to claim compensation, Raab finally closed the factory. Source: *Fair-fish* 7. 4. 09

+Scottish salmon farms have been accused of committing as many as 30,000 criminal offences under animal cruelty laws last year. Mr Scott

Landsburgh, Chief Executive of the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation (SSPO) admitted that there had been between 20 and 30 thousand seal attacks on salmon farms last year and that many thousands of salmon had been injured and killed in these attacks. He also said that members of his organisation had shot hundreds of seals at the farms. John Robins of Save Our Seals Fund claims that by failing to prevent these events each attack constitutes a criminal offence by a fish farmer under the Animal Health & Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. He added: ‘...until we can force the industry to comply with the laws on animal welfare we ask the public not to buy Scottish salmon – the real price in terms of fish welfare and dead seals is just too high. Source: *Save Our Seals Fund* 13. 4. 09

BACK TO SHELLFISH AND THE ‘FOOD’ INDUSTRY

There are many papers covering the use of shellfish in their cookery pages. So this is the time for the Crustastun to be promoted on an international scale and to become the norm. *In the Daily Echo*, 8. 10. 08 Andrea Ball, sitting at a table in a Brasserie in Southampton, says: ‘Good quality tasty food is best served simply so my grilled prawns off the specials board really needed no accompaniment.’ She then chose the crab thermidor also off the specials board, but says she often finds tackling a whole crustacean at the dinner table a bit of a chore, so this one had the fresh meat taken out of it. (Amazing, isn’t it, these people even have to have the thing cut up for them. Does someone then spoon feed them, scraping the dribble off their chins? Ed.) Readers might like to know (!) about thermidor. Lobster Thermidor was created in 1894 by Marie’s, a Paris restaurant near the theatre [Comédie Française](#), to honour the opening of the play *Thermidor* by [Victorien Sardou](#). The play took its name from a [summer month](#) in the [French Republican Calendar](#), during which the [Thermidorian Reaction](#) occurred, overthrowing [Robespierre](#) and ending the [Reign of Terror](#).^[1] Unlike the recipe, the play was not a critical success and is rarely performed. Due to expensive and extensive preparation involved, Lobster Thermidor is usually considered a recipe primarily for special occasions. A related lobster recipe is [Lobster Newberg](#). *Found on the web*. Ed. + Another restaurant, called Murano and owned by – guess who? – Mr Ramsay, has grey leather on the walls and the writer had Cromer crab on squid-ink linguine. Apparently this was stunning. Source: *Stella Magazine* 16. 11. 08. +And a real charmer comes from the *Daily Tel* 13. 12. 08 and is basically a Roman dish. It is called Lasagnetta alla marinara. It contains tiger prawns,

(forget the mangrove swamps!) mussels, scallops, and squid. Then you first pull the squid tentacles away from the body and keep them in the fridge until later. Apparently you can buy all these creatures, blast-frozen, freshly landed, and defrost them at home. I must say that the efforts these people go to is incredible. First, go out to sea, then catch your fish, then blast-freeze it, then prepare it then finally eat it, if you haven’t got so hungry by this time that you’ve thrown it all in the bin and done a nice bit of vegan bacon and sausage!

Terroirs in London is another place where shellfish seems to be a must. And squid seems to be coming into its own. (So long as you pull the tentacles off and put them in the fridge for later!)

But *Country Living Mag.* 12. 3. 09, really takes the bisuit. Along with all the other creatures she eats the writer explains how to kill and cook crab for Louisiana crabcakes. She says: ‘Place the crabs carefully in a large pot of cold, unsalted water – unlike lobsters they take fright easily and have an alarming habit of throwing off their legs and claws. Bring them gently to the boil, a process that lulls them to sleep (yeah, of course it does! Ed And so on!) Then comes the juicy bit. She goes on to say: ‘Pull the brown upper shell from the pale underside to expose the interior body. Remove the fringe of feathery grey gills and snap off the mouthpiece and discard. Use a lobster pick or kebab stick to winkle the white meat out of the claws, legs and body. BE PATIENT.’ (my capitals. Ed.)

My last horror story comes from the same mag. and describes how to cook lobster. ‘Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil and plunge the lobsters in head first. Or (the officially approved method (sic)), first bang a sharp cook’s knife firmly into the middle of the cross-shape where the head meets the body and proceed with the boiling as above. (Dear God, what are they about? How much suffering can these dear creatures take? I think I’ll leave it there! Lots more, but you know the plot by now. Ed.)

