

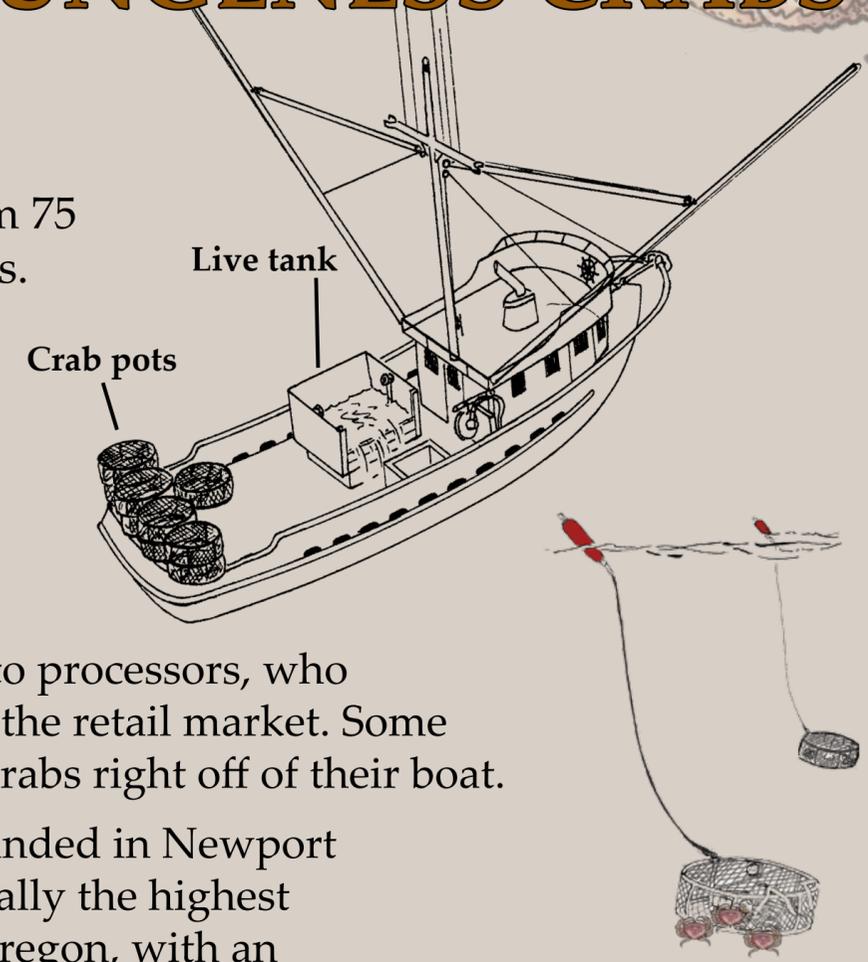
# NEWPORT'S COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

**CRAB FISHERMEN** use baited traps or pots to catch Dungeness crabs from December 1 to August 15. They are allowed to drop their traps in the water on November 28 to “presoak.” The traps are baited with squid, clams, or fish carcasses, and dropped overboard where they sit on the sandy or muddy ocean bottom in depths of 20-500 feet. They are pulled and emptied every few days.

## DUNGENESS CRABS

Most traps are circular, measure 3 to 4 feet across, and weigh from 75 to 120 pounds. Crabs enter the trap through openings on the sides. Smaller openings on the trap allow undersized crabs to escape.

In addition, a section of the top panel is fastened with biodegradable twine called rotten cotton. If the trap becomes lost, the twine deteriorates in about 60-90 days, allowing any crabs left inside the trap an opportunity to crawl out.



The live crabs are delivered to processors, who cook, clean, and sell them to the retail market. Some fishermen will also sell live crabs right off of their boat.

More Dungeness crabs are landed in Newport than anywhere else. It is usually the highest valued seafood product in Oregon, with an average value of 29 million dollars annually.

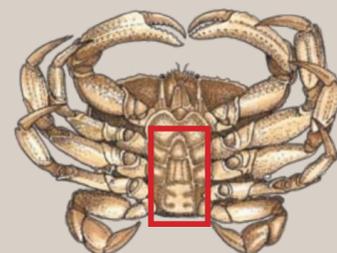
*Illustration by Herb Goblirsch*

## CRAB FISHERY MANAGEMENT

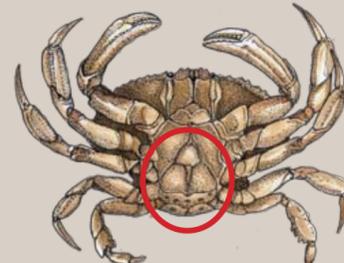
Dungeness crabs have been harvested commercially on the Oregon coast since the late 1800s. The fishery is managed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife using a management plan called the three S's or Size, Sex, and Season.

For commercial harvest, only male crabs with a shell size of 6 1/4 inches across or larger can be harvested between December 1 and August 15. Enough mature males remain to mate with the females, which helps maintain a sustainable fishery.

**DUNGENESS CRABS**, *Cancer magister*, are crustaceans. They have an outer shell that protects them from predators. Male crabs can be distinguished from female crabs by turning them over and looking at their abdomen. Male crabs have a narrow abdominal flap on their shell, while female crabs have an oval flap.



male crab



female crab

