

Definitions starting with F

Fishing

Bahamians have always found the sea more profitable than the land. Shallow waters suitable for small-scale FISHENING can be easily reached from all settlements; even near Nassau there are still many DROPS where the fishing is good. HAULING is the most efficient way to catch schooling fish like GOGGLE-EYE and bonefish; to do this boats DROGUE seine nets or FANS in the WHITE WATER just off shore. SCALE-FISHING, especially for larger fish like GROUPER and SACK, can be done by line when anchored over BLUE HOLES, the EDGE OF THE OCEAN, or a coral-head. Fish are often kept alive in boat wells or FLOATS so at dockside customers can choose one that is sure to be fresh, then have it filleted with a FISH-KNIFE on the spot. One used to buy a KIT of fish wholesale or a STRING of fish retail; surplus supplies used to be preserved as CORN FISH, but nowadays refrigeration is more usual. Turtles are hunted by scanning the reefs they frequent with a GLASS. The buccaneers would STRIKE them with a PEG on a staff, but nowadays they are caught with a BULLY-NET, in which their WINGS become entangled. The meat of all turtles is edible, but Bahamians prefer that of the green turtle, nicknamed VEAL-OF-THE-SEA. The BACK of the hawksbill turtle was used until recently to make "tortoise-shell" ornaments, but since this species came under protection in the United States this practice has declined.

Bahamians still sometimes gather marine gastropods such as WHILES and CURBS, BREAK them OUT, and eat them in salads or soups, but only the CONCH is of real economic importance. CRABBENING is still popular—especially TORCHING With a FLAMPER—but the BLACK and WHITE CRABS that are widely eaten are not marine but land animals.

The CRAWFISH is now the main cash crop from the sea. CRAWFISHERMEN catch it in baited fish traps or by putting out in shallow water the empty oil drums it likes to live in. If spotted hiding in coral holes from which its WHIPS protrude, the crawfish is PROGUED out with a TICKLER into the open; there it can be shot with a RUBBER GUN, using a spear with a BEARD. Once caught, these crustaceans are not kept alive: only their luscious tails are shipped off (fresh or frozen).

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Author: n/a

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