

A CLAM MEASURING BOARD

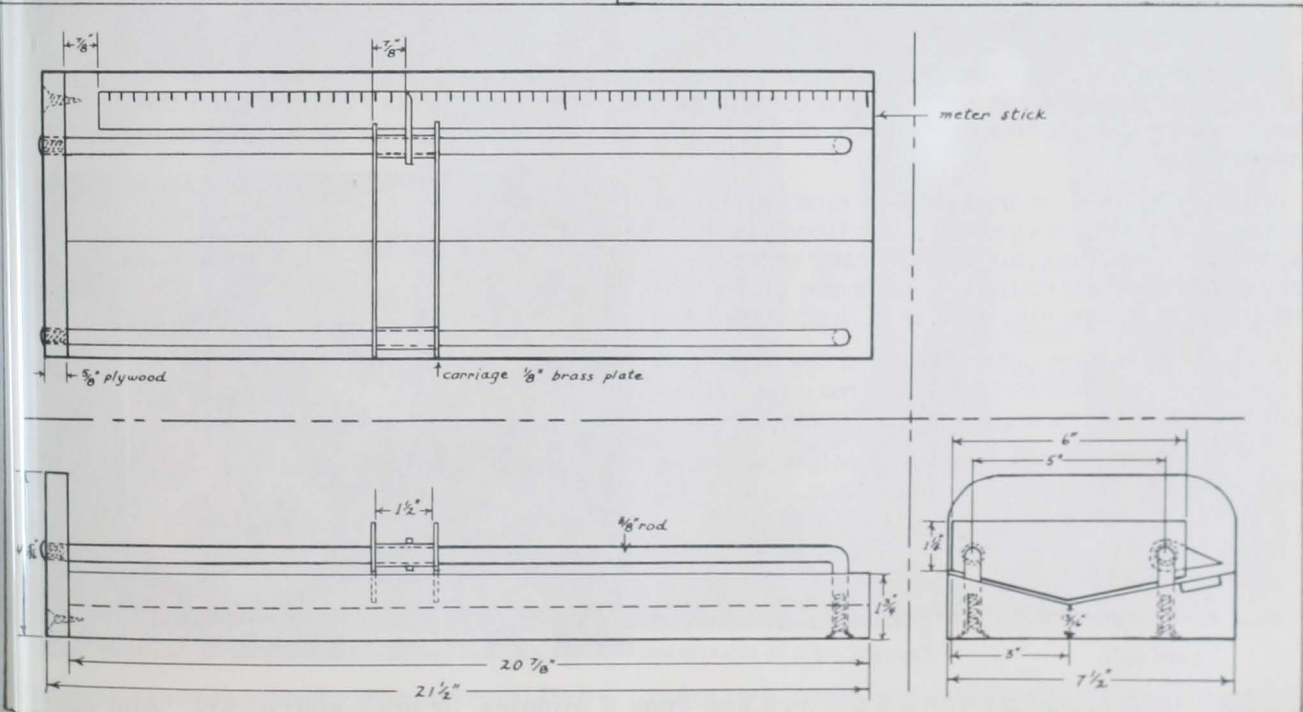
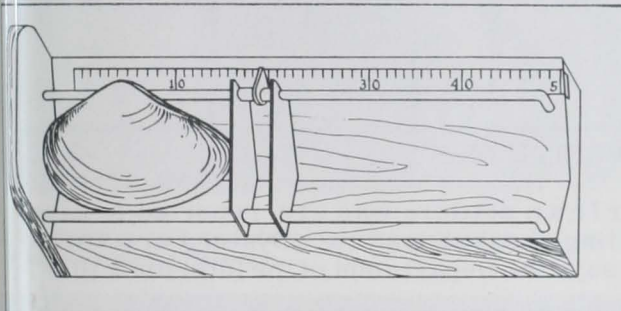
By Phillip S. Parker*

In spring 1964, a clam measuring board (fig.) was developed at the BCF Exploratory Fishing and Gear Research Base, Gloucester, Mass. A different type of board was needed to make rapid and accurate measurements of surf clams (*Spisula solidissima*) aboard vessels at sea because the boards available were generally unsuited for this type of work. With the new board, we were able to make clam measurements rapidly and accurately even under rough sea conditions. Considerable savings in time and effort were effected.

This measuring board can be built by almost anyone handy with tools (see List of Materials and fig.). The entire board (excluding metal parts) is covered with polyester resin to reduce wear and wood deterioration from the action of sand and salt water during use. A light application of grease on the rails is necessary for smooth action of the carriage; the only other maintenance required is to replace the meter stick after the markings become unreadable.

The Materials Needed

1. One piece of $\frac{5}{8}$ " plywood, $4\frac{5}{16}$ " x $7\frac{1}{2}$ ", for the end plate.
2. One piece of 2" x 8" x 21" clear white pine beveled for the bed of the measuring board.
3. One meter stick recessed and secured by small finish nails into the top of the board,



Sketch of measuring board used during surf clam surveys aboard the BCF research vessel "Delaware".

*Fishery Biologist, Exploratory Fishing and Gear Research Base, BCF, Gloucester, Mass.
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and offset from the end plate, so the pointer is at zero when the carriage is against the end plate. (Note: the pointer should not scrape the surface of the meter stick.)

4. Two stainless-steel rods, $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 24", for carriage rails.

5. One small flat piece of brass plate, $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 1" x 2", for pointer, which is brazed to a carriage bushing.

6. Two brass plates, $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 2" x 6", plus two $\frac{1}{2}$ " outside diameter $1\frac{1}{2}$ " brass bushings for the

sliding carriage. The plates are brazed to the bushings. The carriage is slid along the rails and the pointer indicates the measurement of the clam on the board.

7. Two $\frac{3}{16}$ " x $\frac{3}{4}$ " flat head bolts and two $\frac{3}{16}$ " x $\frac{3}{4}$ " round head bolts for securing the rails to the bed and end plate.

8. Two $\frac{3}{16}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " flat head screws for attaching and securing end plate to bed of measuring board.



OYSTERS STILL A FAVORITE DISH

Oysters were a favorite dish of early American settlers who are reported to have learned about the delicacy by watching Indians eating roasted oysters. Oysters are still a favorite dish of many persons in the United States, says the Department of the Interior's BCF.

Oysters are found along this country's coastlines from Massachusetts to Texas and from Washington to Mexico.

The idea that oysters should be eaten only in months containing the letter "R" is simply not true. Actually these succulent mollusks are at their best in May and June on the Atlantic Coast, even though some states prohibit their harvest from public grounds during spring and summer.

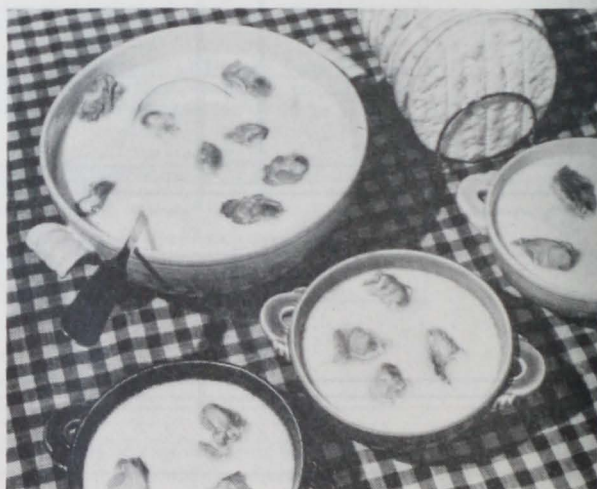
"They should be included in meal planning because of their flavor and nutritional value," said H. E. Crowther, acting director of the Bureau. He emphasized that oysters are an excellent source of protein, minerals, and vitamins.

Oysters can be served raw on the half shell or in stews or chowders. They may be baked, broiled, fried, creamed, or scalloped.

The following oyster stew recipe has been developed by BCF home economists.

OYSTER STEW

1 pint oysters	$1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
4 tablespoons butter	$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper
1 quart milk	Paprika



Melt butter, add drained oysters and cook 3 minutes or until edges curl. Add milk, salt, and pepper, and bring almost to boiling point. Serve at once. Garnish with paprika. Serves 6.

Further suggestions on the selection and preparation of oysters can be obtained by writing for the recipe booklet, "How to Cook Oysters." It is available for 20 cents from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.