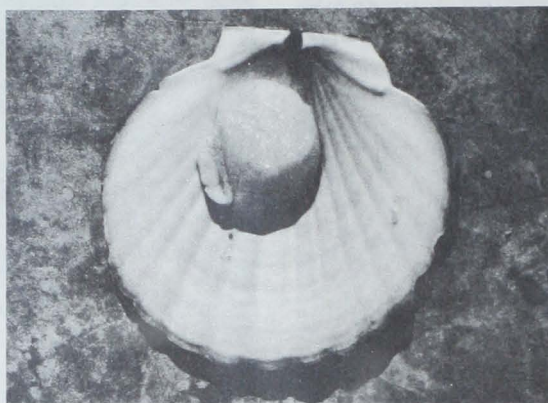


FOOD FISH FACTS



SCALLOP MEAT AND SHELL

Throughout the centuries many romantic and historical events have evolved with the beautiful scallop shell as a symbol. Buildings in ancient Pompeii were ornamented with scallop shell designs. During the Crusades scallop shells were the symbol of the holy pilgrimages and one European variety is still referred to as "the pilgrim" or "St. James' shell." Poets have written about their beauty and artists so admired their symmetry and grace that they were often used in paintings of Venus and the name "Venus-cocle" came into common usage in Old English.

Early American Indians of the Pacific Northwest used scallop shells in their ceremonial dances and some tribes used them as ornaments. Today the shells are eagerly sought by collectors. The larger shells are frequently used as practical, individual containers for cooking and serving fish mixtures.

Inside the scallop shell is another work of art that is also a source of eating pleasure to all people who love good food from the sea.

DESCRIPTION

The name "scallop" aptly describes the fluted edges of the fan-shaped scallop shell. The shells of young scallops, in particular, are beautiful; the outside is delicately colored, sometimes having pink and white or other darker color variations. The inside of the shells is pearly-white and has a satiny luster.

Scallops, like clams and oysters, are mollusks having two shells. They differ, however, from those shellfish in that they are active swimmers. The scallop swims freely through the waters and over the ocean floor by snapping its shells together. This action results in the development of an oversized muscle called the "eye" and this sweet-flavored muscle is the only part of the scallop eaten by Americans. Europeans, in contrast, eat the entire scallop meat.

The New England sea scallop (*Placpecten magellanicus*) is the most commercially important scallop in the United States. It has a saucer-shaped shell and grows as large as 8 inches in diameter with the muscle or "eye" sometimes reaching up to 2 inches across.

The bay scallop is much less plentiful but greatly desired by scallop fanciers. It reaches a maximum size of about 4 inches in diameter with the muscle or "eye" about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch across. The bay scallop shell is similar to that of the sea scallop except that it is smaller, more grooved, and the edges are more serrated or scalloped.

DESCRIPTION (Contd.)

A number of important new scallop beds have been found recently through National Marine Fisheries explorations. The calico scallop, located off Florida and in the Gulf of Mexico, is closely related to the bay scallop although slightly larger. It gets the name "calico" from the mottled or calico appearance of the shells.

Particularly exciting has been the discovery of a new and potentially important source of sea scallops in the cold waters surrounding Alaska. This species, found as far south as Oregon, is a different variety of sea scallop than that found in New England waters.

HABITAT

Sea scallops from the east coast are taken from the deep waters of the Northern and Middle Atlantic States, with the old whaling port of New Bedford, Massachusetts claiming most of the catch. This is still the largest source of supply.

Bay scallops live in bays and estuaries from New England to the Gulf of Mexico.

SCALLOP FISHING

Sea scallops are harvested with dredges on gravel, sand, or sand-mud bottoms. Some trawl fishermen harvest scallops on a part-time basis. This necessitates removing the otter trawl nets and bringing aboard the equipment needed for scallop dredging.

Bay scallops are taken with small dredges operated from small boats or scows in deeper bay waters. In shallow water bay scallops are usually taken with dip nets, rakes, or by hand.

Scallops cannot close their shells tightly and die soon after being taken from the water. Because of their perishability scallops are shucked aboard ship as soon as they are caught, and the meats are iced.

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

The supply of scallops has decreased in some areas in recent years. Many factors affect their abundance, some of which are beyond man's control. Studies are being made to correct this problem through grant-in-aid legislation passed by Congress, the Commercial Fisheries Research and Development Act of 1964. Through research and explorations it is hoped that a continuing and abundant supply of scallops can be provided for an ever-growing population.

USES OF SCALLOPS

The tender, succulent meats from either bay or sea scallops have no waste and can be used interchangeably. All scallop meats are excellent sources of protein, have many of the vitamins and minerals valuable in good nutrition, and are low in fat. The delicately-flavored nuggets of meat are available throughout the year either fresh or frozen. (National Marketing Services Office, NMFS, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 100 East Ohio Street, Room 526, Chicago, Ill. 60611.)