

## A History of the Pearl Oyster Fishery in the Archipelago de las Perlas, Panama

MacKenzie, Jr. , Clyde L. (1999) *A History of the Pearl Oyster Fishery in the Archipelago de las Perlas, Panama*. Marine Fisheries Review, 61(2), pp. 58-65.



PDF (The document's language is English .) - Requires a PDF viewer such as [GSview](#), [Xpdf](#) or [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)  
[Download \(4MB\)](#) | [Preview](#)

Official URL: <http://spo.nwr.noaa.gov/mfr612/mfr6122.pdf>

### Abstract

The pearl oyster, *Pinctada margaritifera mazatlanica*, was once found around the Archipelago de las Perlas in Panama in abundance and it supported a substantial fishery by hard hat divers. The products were pearls, shells used for making buttons, and meats used locally for food. After the mid 1920's, the fishery declined due to overfishing, and by the 1940's it was nearly gone. The oysters began to repopulate the grounds during the 1970's, but the oysters remain relatively scarce. Fishing has since resumed on a small scale by skin divers using face masks.

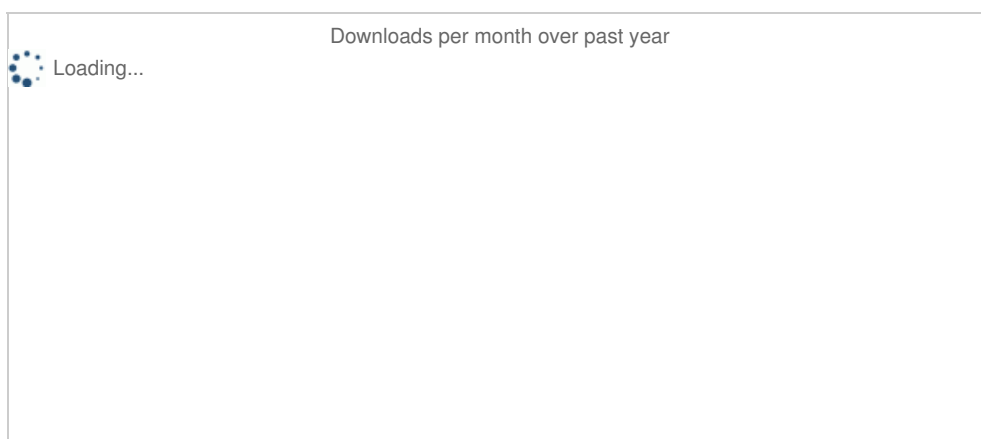
| <b>Item Type:</b>                    | Article  |          |       |                           |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------|-------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Title:</b>                        | A History of the Pearl Oyster Fishery in the Archipelago de las Perlas, Panama   |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Personal Creator/Author:</b>      | <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Creators</th><th>Email</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>MacKenzie, Jr. , Clyde L.</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> | Creators | Email | MacKenzie, Jr. , Clyde L. |  |
| Creators                             | Email  |          |       |                           |  |
| MacKenzie, Jr. , Clyde L.            |  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Refereed:</b>                     | Yes  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Journal or Publication Title:</b> | Marine Fisheries Review  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Volume:</b>                       | 61   |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Number:</b>                       | 2  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Page Range:</b>                   | pp. 58-65  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Date:</b>                         | 1999   |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>ISSN:</b>                         | 0090-1830  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Issuing Agency:</b>               | United States National Marine Fisheries Service  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Subjects:</b>                     | <a href="#">Biology</a><br><a href="#">Ecology</a><br><a href="#">Fisheries</a>  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Item ID:</b>                      | 9794   |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Depositing User:</b>              | Patti M. Marraro   |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Date Deposited:</b>               | 14 Aug 2012 20:11  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>Last Modified:</b>                | 14 Aug 2012 20:11  |          |       |                           |  |
| <b>URI:</b>                          | <a href="http://aquaticcommons.org/id/eprint/9794">http://aquaticcommons.org/id/eprint/9794</a>  |          |       |                           |  |

Actions (login required)



View Item

Downloads



Aquatic Commons is powered by [EPrints 3](#) which is developed by the [School of Electronics and Computer Science](#) at the University of Southampton. [More information and software credits](#).

Throughout history, the pearl, with its warm inner glow and shimmering iridescence, has been one of the most highly prized and sought-after gems. Countless references to the pearl can be found in the religions and mythology of cultures from the earliest times. The ancient Egyptians prized pearls so much they were buried with them. In ancient Rome, pearls were considered the ultimate symbol of wealth and social standing. The Greeks held the pearl in high esteem for both its unrivaled beauty and its association with love and marriage. During the Dark Ages, while fair maidens of nobility cherished delicate pearl necklaces, gallant knights often wore pearls into battle. They believed the magic of these lustrous gems would protect them from harm. Natural pearls of the pearl oyster *Pinctada mazatlanica* are typically baroque or semi-baroque, with a silver to dark gray body color and strong overtones of blue, lavender, and green (figure 2). Sometimes a reddish or purple hue can be seen in pearls obtained from oysters established in deeper, colder water, or from older oysters. The Indians of the San Ignacio mission told a soldier, Manuel de Ocio, of this spectacular event. Ocio then resigned his military post, collected these treasures from the beaches, and began to sell pearls on the mainland. There he bought all the equipment necessary to exploit the virgin pearl-oyster grounds of the northern Gulf of California (del Barco, 1973).