

SOUNDSIDE LEARNING THIS WEEK ON CORE SOUND

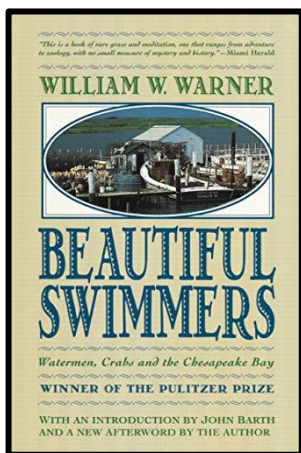


April 3, 2023

JOIN US!

- **April 5:** *Soundside Science & Story Time* for ages 3-5, 10 AM
- **April 20-21:** *Earth Day @ Core Sound*, teachers register now!
- **April 21-22:** “*Crystal Coast Star Party*”

Sound Reading Material For You



Beautiful Swimmers

By William W. Warner

This classic Pulitzer Prize-winning study of the Atlantic blue crab and the people of the Chesapeake Bay who have depended on it for generations is a magnificent story of the blue crab, the women and men who live off the sea, and the great Chesapeake Bay itself. Warner spent several years and many hours with the watermen and his result is surely a prize.

Pages: 304

Soft Is Hard to Beat

Soft crabs are typically blue crabs in the middle of a major conversion. A blue crab, in order to grow larger, is forced to shed its shell periodically and replace it with another that is very soft and flexible that will allow it to grow. Once crabs burst out of their old shells, amazingly, replacements harden in just a matter of hours. The trick to harvesting soft-shell crabs is to catch them during this transitional stage. Rather than search the ocean for soft crabs, our fishermen catch crabs about to molt, called peeler crabs or peelers, and hold them in saltwater tanks. As soon as the crabs drop their shells, they are pulled from the water which stops a new exoskeleton from hardening.

Davis’s Rodney Salter started dragging the Banks for peelers and setting peeler pots in 1999. He started with tanks on the shore and later moved to an enclosed system in his barn. The water in which he keeps his catch is water brought from the sound. He knows well that this is nonstop work every hour of every day when the crabs are shedding, but he also knows how rewarding it is to see the process happen and the beautiful soft crabs that result.

A few other terms used when discussing soft crabs are “paper shell” and “buckram.” Paper shell crabs are past the soft-shell stage but not yet buckrams. This happens approximately 9 to 12 hours after they molt. Buckram crabs are past the paper shell stage but not yet in the true hard-shell condition. This occurs about 12 to 24 hours after shedding takes place.

Cleaning soft crabs is not difficult, but you can usually purchase them already cleaned around here! If you are up for the challenge, ask a local how to clean and prepare these delicacies. You can cook and eat the *whole* crab. Fried is my favorite way and is the most common cooking technique used in these parts! My goodness, they are so good!



left photo by Melissa Willis
above photo from coastalreview.org

Easter Egg Memories

When my mom and dad were little, egg hunts at Easter were a cherished event. Eggs were hidden for children to find throughout their yards while friends and families gathered to catch up on local news. This tradition continued while I grew up with immediate and extended family members gathering to eat, visit, and egg hunt.

The nostalgia of the Easter egg was celebrated, though, in a very special way by my mom for my dad. Mama made chocolate Easter eggs that we would savor for as long as we could! Mom individually wrapped each treat and placed them in the freezer. We would then ration them out and enjoy them throughout the Easter season, slicing off bites that we would eat often with our eyes closed to more fully enjoy the experience. Here is my family's treasured Easter egg recipe. Trust me, you will thank me for this! Enjoy and Happy Easter!

Lana's Easter Eggs



- 1 lg jar of maraschino cherries, cut up
- 2 cups raisins
- 2 cups chopped pecans
- 2 cups coconut
- 1 stick of margarine, room temperature
- 2 lb confectioner's sugar
- 12 oz semi-sweet chocolate
- 1 bar paraffin wax



Mix first 6 ingredients. Slowly add cherry juice to consistency that resembles cookie dough. Roll into eggs, size desired. Use confectioner's sugar or margarine to help keep mixture from sticking to hands. Place on wax paper. Wet a kitchen dish towel and ring out until almost dry. Put on top of eggs and place in freezer. In a double boiler, melt chips and paraffin wax (cut up). Dip eggs one at a time into chocolate mixture. Place on wax paper; let stand until firm. Wrap individually in saran wrap and freeze!

Nor'easters

Easter season is here and so it's not unusual for high winds to bellow in our area. Nor'easters are gust storms along our coast that are named as such because the winds over the area are typically from the northeast. These storms may occur at any time of year but are most frequent and strongest between September and April. If you were in our area this past week, you experienced one! They nearly always bring precipitation in the form of heavy rain, as well as winds of gale force, rough seas, and, occasionally, coastal flooding to the affected regions.

Where cold air and warm water meet a low pressure system is created. The low pressure system causes clouds to form and a storm to develop. A nor'easter forms when cold air often originating in Canada blows over the warm Atlantic Ocean off our coast.

Unlike hurricanes, which develop in the tropics, nor'easters form in mid-latitudes. Nor'easters form from contrasting air masses and are cold at their core. Hurricanes are warm at their core and are fueled by warm ocean waters, usually at least 80 degrees. A nor'easter usually lasts a couple days.

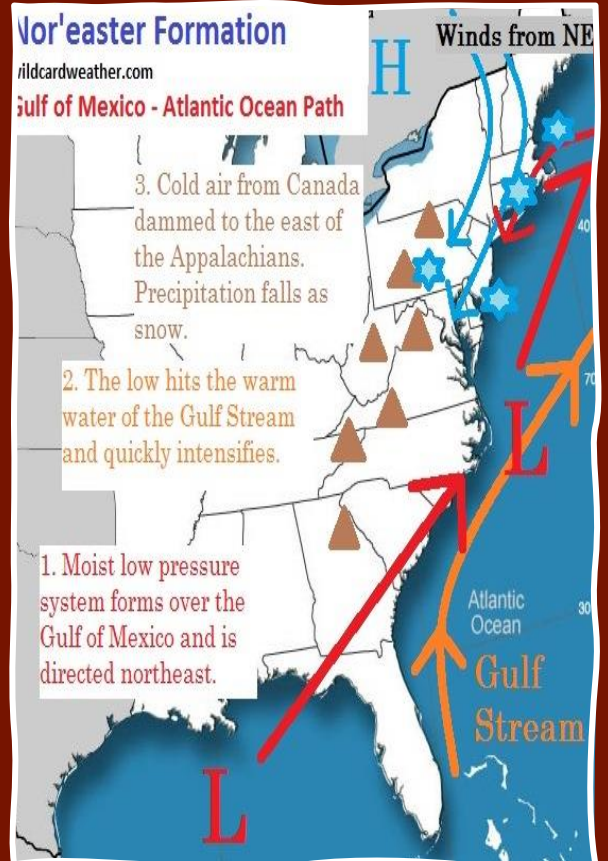


diagram from www.wildcardweather.com