

SOUNDSIDE LEARNING THIS WEEK ON CORE SOUND

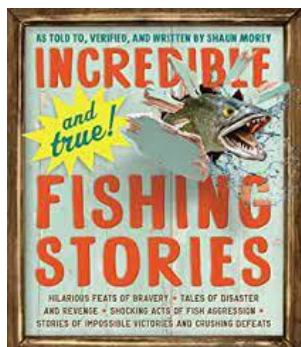


March 20, 2023

JOIN US!

- **March 22:** *Soundside Science & Story Time* for ages 3-5, 10 AM
- **March 23:** *Crystal Coast Quilters & Partners:* National Quilt Month
- **April 1:** *7th Annual Core Sound Run* @ 9 AM

Sound Reading Material For You & Your Child



Incredible--and True!-- Fishing Stories

By Shaun Morey

From crazy billfish quests to the scientist who hooked a grizzly, from "fish catches man" horror stories to those nutty catfish noodlers who grope into the murkiest holes bare-handed, here are fishing's most unpredictable and spectacular tales. Shaun Morey traveled the world—including Alaska, Australia, Mexico, and the Caribbean—to interview anglers, boat captains, guides, and witnesses who can say: Yes, this really happened!

Pages: 224
Grades: 6+

Swell Toads, Forks & Furniture

Flowers, warmer temperatures, longer days, and swell toads! These are harbingers of a Down East spring! Throughout my life these signs of winter's departure have been accompanied by my dad's swell toad stories. I will now share one of my favorites with you!

In mid-March of 1957, Mississippi, whose name was James Archie although Dad never refers to him as such, and Dad formed a business agreement. Every afternoon for a week, Daddy, a freshman in high school, rushed home, grabbed a cold light bread biscuit, filled it with a couple of pieces of whatever Grandma had atop the stove which was oftentimes fried potatoes, and was on his way across the road to Granddaddy Henry's fish house. There, Mississippi was waiting for his partner with knives sharpened, empty boxes stacked, heavy Navy forks prepped (with bent tong and handle tips and wrapped with tape to form a grip), and freshly caught swell toads piled high!

Every afternoon from about 4:00 until 11:00 that night, Mississippi and Daddy skinned swell toads to sell to Clayton Fulcher. Mississippi would skillfully slice through the skin just behind the head of the fish and toss it to Dad who would then flip the fish over onto itself, stab the edge of the meat with his cleverly crafted fork, and pull it out deftly while simultaneously flipping it into a box that would later be packed with ice.

For one week, these two fellas worked tirelessly and skinned 16,000 pounds of swell toads! This translated to 4,000 pounds of edible meat sold for four cents per pound. Mississippi and Dad split their \$160 earnings, and Daddy bought himself a bedroom suit. He said his new bed slept mighty good, too.



photo from www.onthewater.com

Where There's a Gill There's a Wave

Have you ever wondered how fish breathe? We know they have gills, but what exactly are gills and how do they keep a fish from drowning underwater?

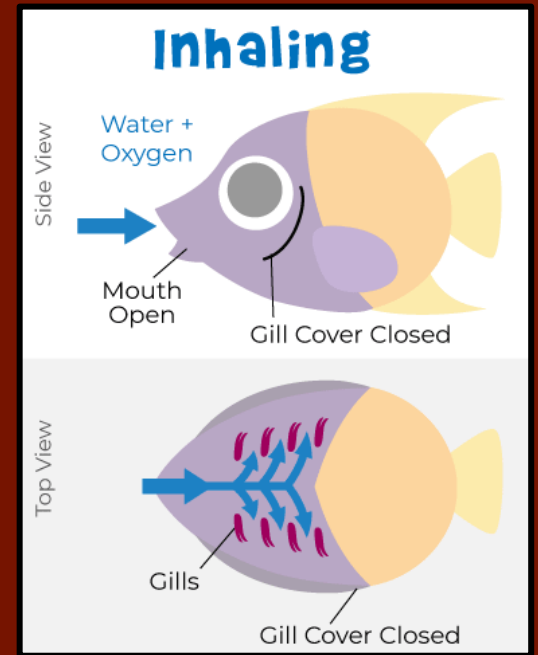
Like us, fish need to take in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide in order to survive. But instead of lungs, they use *gills*. Gills are branching organs located on the side of fish heads that have a huge amount of small blood vessels called capillaries. As the fish opens its mouth, water runs over the gills, and blood in the capillaries picks up oxygen that is dissolved in the water. Then the blood moves through the fish's body carrying the oxygen, just like in our bodies. All bony fish also have a bony plate called an operculum, which opens and closes to protect the gills.

Did you know that fish are not the only sea organisms to use gills? Mollusks and crustaceans also have gills that operate the same way by pulling oxygen out of the water as it runs over the gills. Some animals even display their gills outside of their bodies! The name "nudibranch" (commonly known as sea slugs) comes from Greek and Latin words meaning "naked gills." Nudibranchs often have feathery, brightly-colored ones that are exposed on their backs. These aquatic creatures are slow movers that meander amidst corals, sponges and shallow-water reefs. Some, like graceful sea hares, have wing-like flaps for swimming.

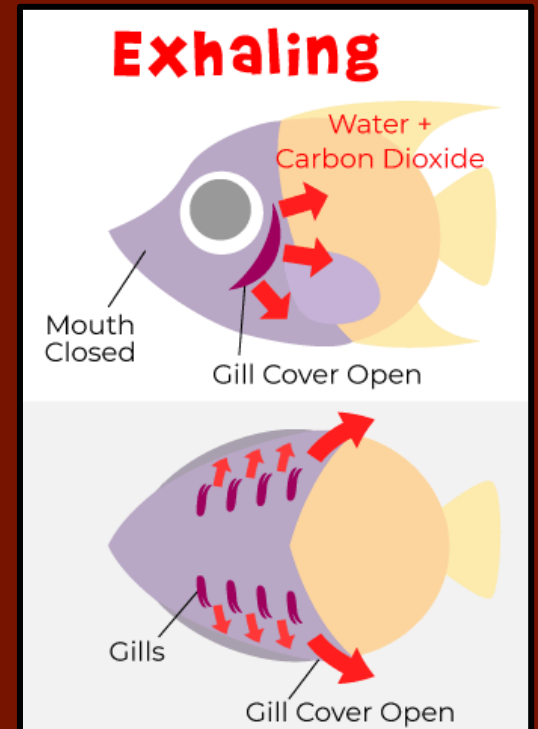
It is hard work to breathe underwater. The air we breathe has an oxygen concentration of 200,000 parts per million. Water, on the other hand, only has a concentration of 4 to 8 parts per million. That means fish need to run lots of water over their gills to get the amount of oxygen they need to survive. Amazingly, gills are very efficient in extracting the oxygen the fish need.

Breathing gets even more difficult when the oxygen concentration decreases. You may have heard of hypoxic zones, also known as "dead zones", where low levels of oxygen make it impossible for animals to survive. Although these areas can occur naturally, hypoxic zones are sometimes created by human activity. When high-nutrient pollution, like farm runoff, enters the ocean, it can cause algal blooms that then die and decompose, causing low-oxygen zones.

Just like we need clean air to breathe, fish need clean water to breathe. We can help gilled organisms thrive by keeping their ocean habitat free of pollutants. Their health and lives literally depend on it.



Gill diagrams from www.animalfunfacts.net



Sea Hare (nudibranch) photo from www.differencebetween.com

