

[Page 1 - Trap Fishing with Mike MacDougall](#)ISSUE : [Issue 17](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1977/8/1

Trap-Fishing with Mike MacDougall You have to have four boats to do the job. You have the tow boat--some people call it the powerboat • it's the only one that has a motor. It tows the fleet of boats behind. The next we call the door boat because it goes underneath the strongback to pull up your door and close the fish off. The third one is called the cut boat because she's the one that all the men go into and cut the twine around and bring the fish around to wherever they're going to be taken up. The dory is something a fellow like myself has to have for rowing around, seeing to this or that • then if you need her, plac? ing her onto a strengthener in a corner to pen off fish. To get ready for mackerel season, it's almost a year-round job. You'll put your stuff away the last of August and then come January or at least February, you start thinking about mending the nets. Then when the weather gets fine • probably the last week of April to the 15th of May • you can paint and caulk your boats. You want to be reaiy to set your twine by the Zij-th of May anymore. This year was supposed to be a late spring. It wasn't. The drift ice stayed around till just about lobster fishing time (May 15th) but I'm sure there were mackerel missed here. They figured the mackerel would be late because of the drift ice, but they were here about the 27th or 28th of May. (You can count on them?) Yes. You hear that they're getting them in Hubbard's, Nova Scotia and Lunen? burg • then Petit-de-Grat and L'Ardoise. Within the next two days after L'Ardoise you're going to get mackerel here. Defi? nitely. You're not going to get a big catch. You'll start probably with 2 or 3. They call them the leaders. Next thing you know you're in the thousands. And winds are very very important. Mackerel is a windward fish. They go against the wind. And to get mackerel coming in along the shore you need the westerly winds • winds off of .the land • the northwest winds or the southwest winds bring them on the shore and hold them on the shore. If you get easterly the fish head into it and they go out and down outside and you miss the bulk of the mackerel. And in the fall they make the return trip • but they don't take the exact road back. Mackerel, in the fall, are a hooking fish. You can jig them. Nobody has tried to trap them then. See, the difference in the fall and in the spring • mackerel is a schooling fish. They are a surface fish, on top of the water, schooling a lot. A fine evening you'll see the water black with pods of them. When they're coming back in the fall, they don't school. You have to use what we call tollins or pogeey • people often grind CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE, NUMBER SEVENTEEN WRECK COVE, CAPE BRETON, NOVA SCOTIA SECOND CLASS MAIL • REGISTRATION NUMBER 3014 A Member of the Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association