

# FLORIDA'S *Big Bend* SHELLFISH TRAIL

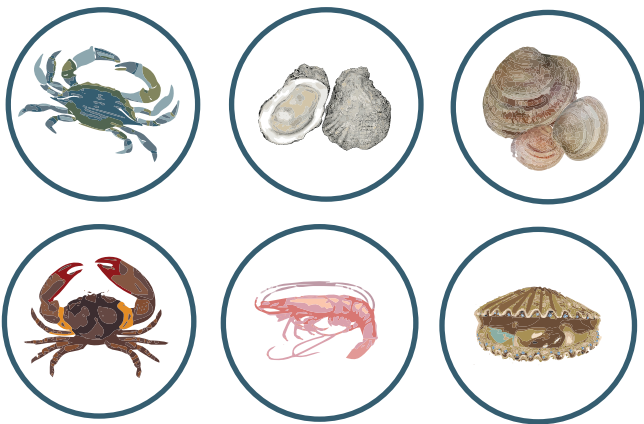


## WORKING WATERFRONTS in Coastal Communities

The Florida Big Bend has a long history of natural resource dependence that date to prehistory. Large Indian shell mounds scattered among the islands testify to the early inhabitants reliance upon shellfish for their sustenance. The waters surrounding the area's coastal communities have historically been tied to their economic survival. Oysters, crabs, shrimp and fish have all crossed docks from Keaton Beach to Yankeetown at one time or another in abundance. Today, clam aquaculture has replaced gill net fishing as the mainstay for many watermen.

Working waterfront communities still pursue mullet, especially during roe season, but now with a cast net to land this well-known southern delight. Far more common today are boats called 'bird dogs' converted to work clam and oyster farms. Although not harvested in the abundance of the past, this Big Bend remains a haven for fresh seafood. Succulent clams, freshly shucked oysters, soft shell crab or stone crab can be found on many menus and are fresh and delicious. With every bit, a taste of the sea and a sense of history.

### SPECIES HARVESTED IN FLORIDA'S BIG BEND REGION



Recreational Bay Scalloping is a summer time adventure along these Florida coastal towns. Check with local chambers of commerce or tourist development websites listed on the map for local restaurants, accommodations and outfitters for scalloping, fishing, educational clam, nature or eco boat tours. These boat tours are just offshore around the beautiful small islands in the Gulf of Mexico. These working waterfront communities offer an excellent "off-the beaten-track" experience for you and your family.

