

Job Report

Thomas L. Heffernan
Marine Biologist

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Project Name: Survey of the Oyster Fishery in Area MO-2
Period Covered: September 1, 1960 to April 15, 1961 Job No. B-2b

Survey and Mapping of the Oyster Reefs
in Aransas and Copano Bays

Abstract: Preliminary surveys were made to locate the general locations of the oyster reefs in Aransas and Copano Bays. Reef measurement was accomplished by marking points along the perimeter of each oyster reef and plotting the perimeter marker with a sextant. Reef areas were computed by transposing the reef outlines on Geodetic Survey maps and deriving acreage from the scale of the map. To date, five reefs in Aransas Bay have been plotted and measured using this means.

Objective: To survey and plot the oyster reefs in Aransas and Copano Bays.

Procedure: A preliminary survey was made to locate the oyster reefs in Aransas and Copano Bays. Upon completion of this survey, measuring of the major reefs was begun. Reef area was determined by marking points along the perimeter of each reef, using a sextant to position each perimeter marker. Area was computed from map scales upon which the reef outlines were plotted.

Findings: Approximately thirty reefs or more have been located in Aransas Bay and about twenty in Copano Bay. These include many areas which are unnamed and should be called "oyster concentrations" rather than reefs. Areas such as spoil banks, mud flats, and exposed shell ridges often have a number of oysters which appear from time to time when conditions favor growth. The possibility of these areas becoming stable oyster reefs is always present, and they are therefore included in reef surveys. A map showing the general location of these reefs (Figures 1 and 2) will give some idea of their distribution in the two bays. The reefs of major size are numbered and named.

During this project, five reefs have been plotted and measured. These are Long Reef, which has an area of 256.19 acres; Paul's Mott, which has an area of 24.79 acres; Daggar Reef, which has an area of 30.7 acres; Pintail Reef, which has 3.42 acres of reef area; and Jay Bird, 167.6 acres.

Comments: Latitude and longitude readings for the major oyster reefs in Aransas Bay are shown in Table 1. Those for Copano Bay are shown in Table 2. All reefs designated in Figures 1 and 2 are producing live oysters. None of the reefs in Aransas Bay have been worked commercially since December 1959, when the bay was closed to oystering as a conservation measure. Copano Bay reefs produce a vast number of small clustered oysters that are well below the size desired for commercial use but have been utilized as seed for transplanting on leases.

Prepared by: Thomas L. Heffernan

Ernest G. Simmons
Regional Supervisor

Approved by: Terrance R. Kearney
Coordinator

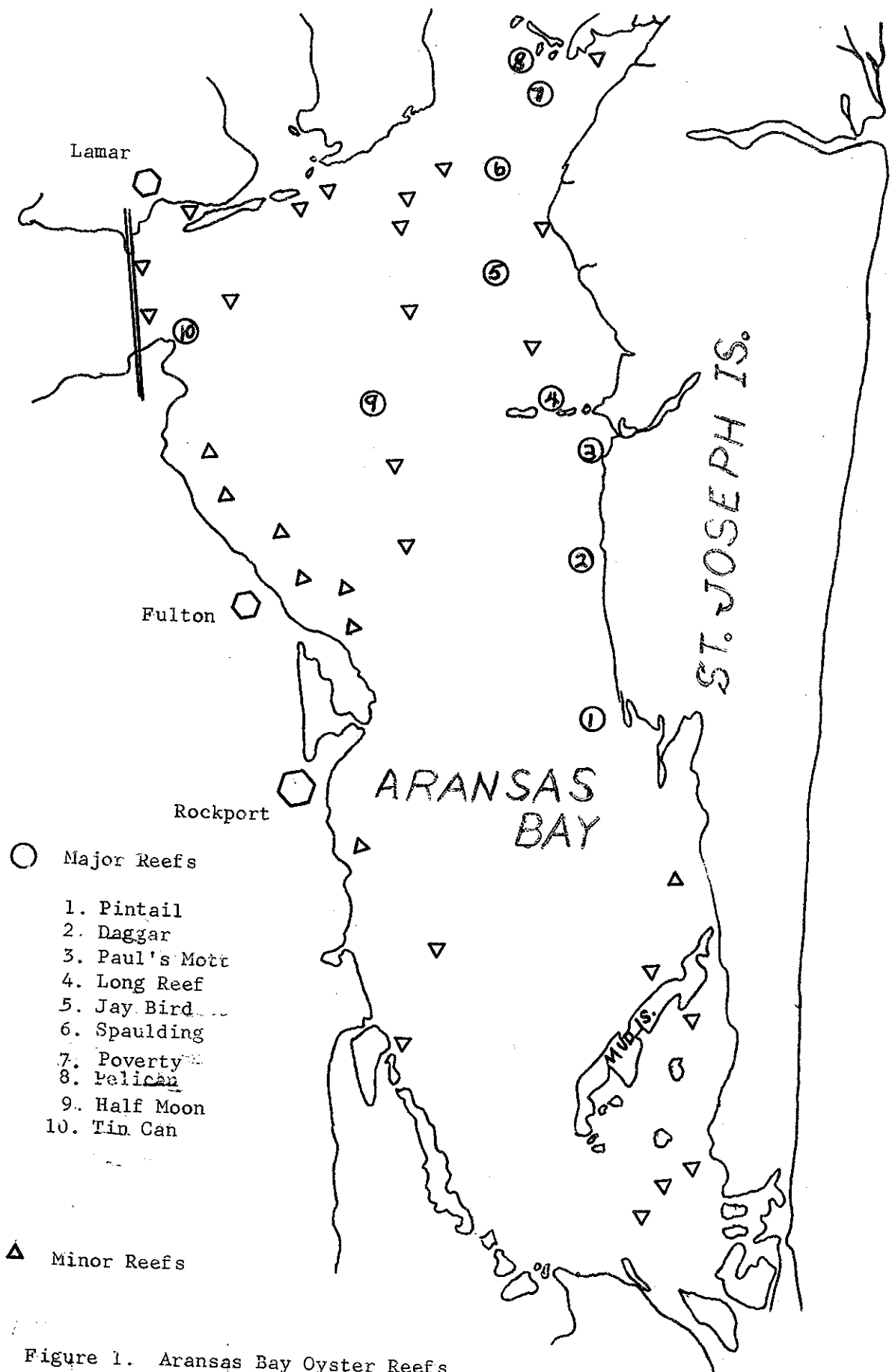


Figure 1. Aransas Bay Oyster Reefs

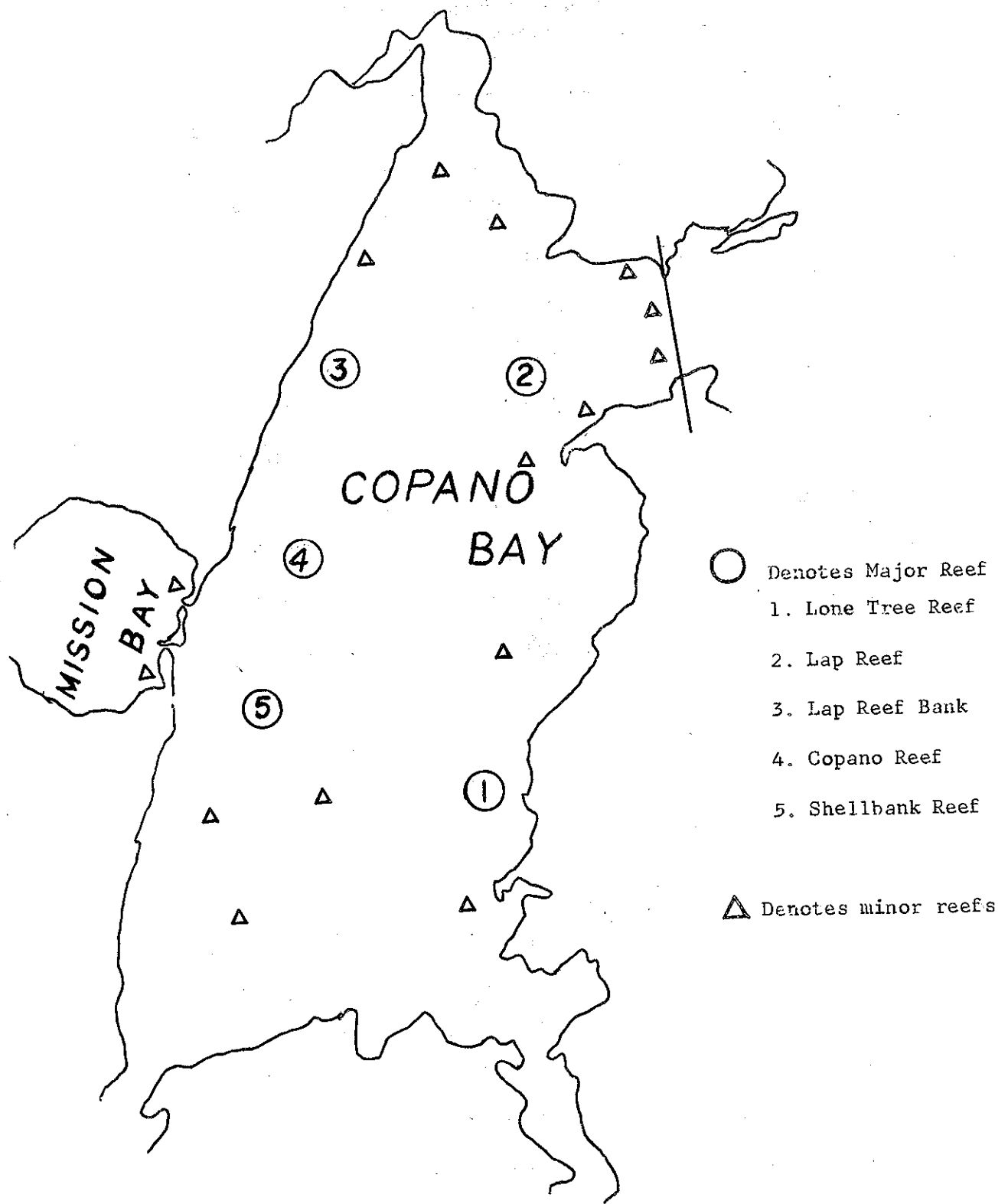


Figure 2. Copano Bay Oyster Reefs

Table 1
 Latitudes and Longitudes of Major Oyster Reefs
 in Aransas Bay

Name of Reef	Latitude	Longitude
1. Pintail	27°59.6'	96°59.6'
2. Daggar	28° 2.4'	96°57.4'
3. Paul's Mott	28° 2.8'	96°57.1'
4. Long Reef	28° 3.6'	96°57.8'
5. Jay Bird	28° 5.3'	96°56.4'
6. Spaulding	28° 6.2'	96°54.8'
7. Poverty	28° 6.2'	96°55.8'
8. Pelican	28° 6.5'	96°56.3'
9. Half Moon	28° 5'	97°
10. Tin Can	28° 6'	97° 1.7'

Table 2
 Latitudes and Longitudes of Major Oyster Reefs
 in Copano Bay

Name of Reef	Latitude	Longitude
1. Lone Tree	28°4.8'	97°7'
2. Lap Reef	28°7.9'	97°4.2'
3. Lap Reef Bank	28°9'	97°5.5'
4. Copano Reef	28°8'	97°7.6'
5. Shellbank	28°7.2'	97°9.5'