

Up to the middle of June, 60 licenses had been granted to fishermen, distributed as follows in four counties:

Fishing center.	County.	No. of fishermen licensed.
Martinez.....	Contra Costa.....	8
Black Diamond.....	do.....	5
Seal Island.....	do.....	2
Marsh Landing.....	do.....	2
Antioch.....	do.....	5
Jersey Landing.....	do.....	2
Bonduin Island.....	San Joaquin.....	3
Benicia.....	Solano.....	2
Benicia Flats.....	do.....	1
Roe Island.....	do.....	2
Long Island.....	do.....	2
Cut Off.....	do.....	5
Suisun Creek.....	do.....	6
Montezuma.....	do.....	3
Broad Slough.....	do.....	3
Dutton's.....	do.....	3
Lakeville.....	Sonoma.....	4
Petaluma Creek.....	do.....	2

The law by virtue of which these licenses are issued (section 636 of the penal code) has a limited value so far as the protection of sturgeon is concerned. Its utility arises from the fact that it enables the State fish commissioners to regulate the size of the hooks used, to keep a check on this method of fishing, and to secure a small fund with which to carry out the patrol of the State waters. The commissioners have no discretion in issuing licenses, and can not regulate the methods, the fishing season, or the quantity of set lines employed by individual fishermen.

The method of taking sturgeon with set lines is generally and justly considered very destructive and cruel. It probably originated in China and was for many years extensively practiced by the Chinese fishermen of California. Recently, however, the use of set lines by the Chinese has been interdicted.

One of the features of the method which makes it especially harmful is the destruction of immature fish. Very large quantities of sturgeon only 15 or 18 inches long are often seen in the markets. The sacrifice of small sturgeon is said, however, to be unavoidable, as the fish that are snagged by the hooks are injured so severely that even if liberated alive most of them would soon die.

Regarding the abundance of sturgeon, it may be stated that while fishermen and dealers acknowledge that the supply is much less than it was prior to ten years ago, still the catch during the past four or five years seems to have been about uniform and appears to be undergoing no reduction.

Sturgeon are usually received at the stalls of the wholesale dealers in a round condition. The fishermen are paid, however, only for the decapitated and eviscerated carcass and for the roe. The latter is made into caviar by some of the dealers. The proportion of the weight of roe and waste parts to the total weight may be judged from the following figures applying to a large female sturgeon examined in the San Francisco market June 11, 1894:

	Pounds.
Total weight.....	243
Weight of roe.....	51
Weight of head and viscera.....	62
Weight of dressed carcass.....	130

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