

**Lyles-Simpson Award  
Recipient  
2023**



***Joseph Albert Shepard***

## **Joseph Albert Shepard**

It is with great pleasure that the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission presents this year's Lyles-Simpson Award to Joseph Shepard. This prestigious award is presented annually to an individual, agency, or organization which has contributed to the betterment of the fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico through significant biological, industrial, legislative, enforcement, or administrative activities.

Joseph Shepard was born and raised in the small coastal town of Grand Isle, Louisiana where he spent his younger days fishing some of the most productive saltwater estuaries in the country. He graduated from Grand Isle High School and attended Nichols State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Biology. At graduation, Joseph received a scholastic and research achievement award. Joseph could not believe that there was a college degree for people that love the outdoors and have a great interest in learning how it all works. His first job after graduation was working at Nichols State University as a fisheries technician collecting fishery and environmental data off the Louisiana coast. A couple of months after graduation, a biological aid position opened up at the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries marine laboratory on Grand Terre island, a small island just east of Grand Isle. Joseph was thrilled to begin his career in such a wonderful place. The laboratory was at the mouth of Barataria Bay providing easy access to some of the best fishery resources in the state. The marine laboratory primarily conducted research on shrimp and oysters. Joseph was one of the first biologists at the laboratory to begin saltwater finfish research.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Finfish Program was established in 1986 to meet the demands of finfish anglers that wanted more research on Spotted Seatrout and Red Drum. Much of the research conducted by Joseph and his fellow biologists at the Marine

Laboratory was used in developing a sampling protocol for the newly established Finfish section. At that time, Joseph was promoted to assistant section leader for the Finfish Program. As the program was getting underway state-wide, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries needed the means to capture the data being collected into a standardized format and computerize it for further analysis. That began what Joseph considered to be his greatest accomplishment. The majority of his career was spent computerizing and standardizing data being collected for the Office of Fisheries. Data could be analyzed in real time and provided to fishery managers to make informed decisions. Part of his responsibility was conducting marine fisheries stock assessments for Louisiana, but also participating on and chairing various Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council stock assessment committees. Joseph also served on various Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission committees and subcommittees over the course of his career.

As the person responsible for the Marine Fisheries data management system, Joseph found himself initiating Louisiana's commercial fisheries trip ticket program and Louisiana's recreational data collection program that is now called LA Creel. These data collection programs greatly enhanced the information going into Louisiana's fishery stock assessments.

For all of these accomplishments and his years of service the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission is proud to present this year's Lyles-Simpson Award to such a worthy recipient.

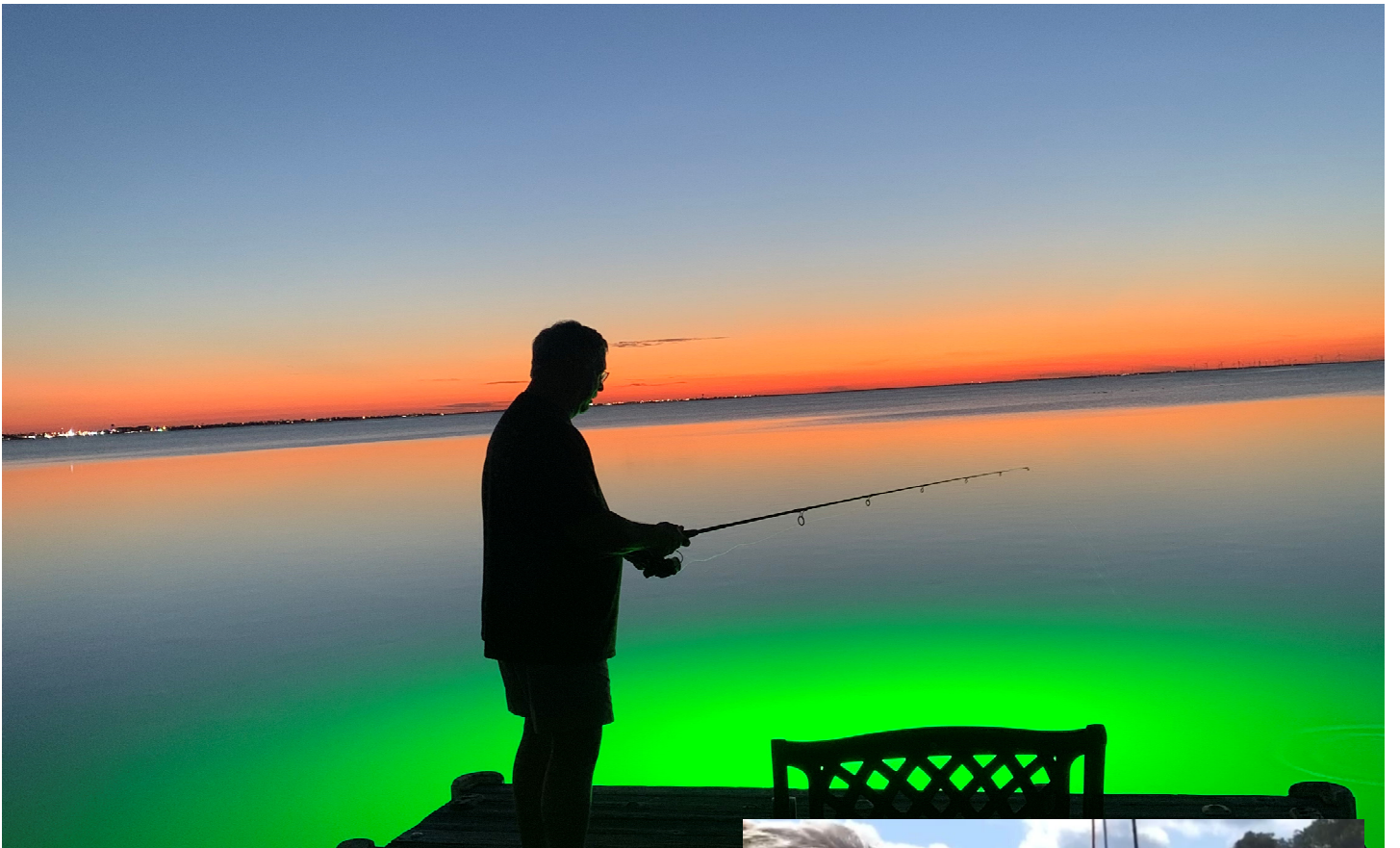






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# Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

## Past Lyles-Simpson Award Recipients

<i>Charles H. Lyles</i>	1984
<i>Theodore B. Ford</i>	1985
<i>J.Y. Christmas</i>	1986
<i>John Breaux</i>	1987
<i>John Ray Nelson</i>	1988
<i>I.B. "Buck" Byrd</i>	1989
<i>Hugh A. Swingle</i>	1990
<i>John A. Mehos</i>	1991
<i>J. Burton Angelle</i>	1992
<i>Louis A. Villanova</i>	1993
<i>Theodore H. Shepard</i>	1994
<i>Edwin A. Joyce, Jr.</i>	1995
<i>Tommy D. Candies</i>	1996
<i>Walter M. Tatum</i>	1997
<i>Thomas L. Heffernan</i>	1998
<i>Trent Lott</i>	1999
<i>James M. Barkuloo</i>	2000
<i>Walter W. Fondren, III</i>	2001
<i>Jerald K. Waller</i>	2002
<i>Andrew J. Kemmerer</i>	2003
<i>Hal R. Osborn</i>	2004
<i>Leroy Kiffe</i>	2005
<i>Robert P. Jones</i>	2006
<i>Wayne E. Swingle</i>	2007
<i>Ralph Rayburn</i>	2008
<i>William S. "Corky" Perret</i>	2009
<i>Albert L. King</i>	2010
<i>Virginia A. Vail</i>	2011
<i>R. Vernon Minton</i>	2012
<i>Larry B. Simpson</i>	2013
<i>Michael C. Voisin</i>	2014
<i>Ellie Francisco Roche</i>	2015
<i>Michael S. Ray</i>	2016
<i>Joseph I. Gill, Jr.</i>	2017
<i>Christopher M. Blankenship</i>	2018
<i>William Borden Wallace</i>	2019
<i>Harriet MacGill Perry</i>	2020
<i>Thomas David McIlwain</i>	2022