

## Underwater Photography of Raft Culture of Oysters

On November 4, 1958, Bill Shaw and I went to Chatham, Mass. to take underwater photographs of his raft-culture of oysters. The raft, with strings of oysters suspended below, is moored in the outlet of the Oyster River.

For diving, I used a standard single tank Aqua-Lung and wore a complete wet-suit with the exception that, on my right hand, instead of the neoprene mitten, I wore a medium weight rubber glove to allow greater dexterity in handling the film transport knob and shutter release of the camera. The camera was a Diax (a German make) 35 mm. in a waterproof housing. A shutter speed of 1/100 second at F/5.6, using Plus-X film, was judged to be sufficient for the light conditions, (full sunshine) and clarity of water. The camera was focused at 5 ft. (underwater) which gave a depth of field from about 4 feet to 7 feet. A pole, 5 feet long, was used to measure subject-to-camera distance.

The raft is located about 100 yards offshore so we were ferried to the raft on the barge of John C. Hammond, a commercial oyster grower. I entered the water from the barge at 1015 hours. The water temperature was 48°F. The tide was dead low so that the raft was in 8 feet of water. Only a very slight current was flowing and this served to remove the small amount of silt stirred up by my moving around on the bottom. The substrate under the raft is firmly packed coarse sand with isolated patches of low growing vegetation. Two flounders and many small bay scallops were seen.

Although the water had seemed perfectly clear looking down from the barge, in the water I could see clearly only to about 4 or 5 feet.

58-4

Maximum visibility was about 8 to 10 feet. The strings of oysters were abundantly covered with vegetation and looked like mops hanging from the raft. I took 28 photographs, moving around to get as many angles of view as possible, and ran out of air about the same time as I finished the film.

I left the water at 1045 hours and we returned to the oysterman's shack where a hot stove and a hotter cup of coffee were waiting for me.

Albert C. Jensen