

Most Important Fish in the Sea

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Synopsis

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In this brilliant portrait of the oceans' unlikely hero, H. Bruce Franklin shows how menhaden have shaped America's national-and natural-history, and why reckless overfishing now threatens their place in both. Since Native Americans began using menhaden as fertilizer, this amazing fish has greased the wheels of U.S. agriculture and industry. By the mid-1870s, menhaden had replaced whales as a principal source of industrial lubricant, with hundreds of ships and dozens of factories along the eastern seaboard working feverishly to produce fish oil. Since the Civil War, menhaden have provided the largest catch of any American fishery.

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