



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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INTERIOR'S SPONGE FILM WINS AMERICAN AWARD

Sponge--Treasure from the Sea, a 16 mm sound-color film recently made available to the public, has won an American Film Festival award, the Department of the Interior reported today.

The award is a certificate showing that the film has passed screening requirements and will be shown at the Festival April 19-22 at the Barbizon-Plaza Hotel in New York City. The Festival is sponsored by the Educational Film Library Association which has its headquarters in New York.

The action of the screening committee puts Sponge--Treasure from the Sea in the Blue Ribbon competition in the Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources category.

The picture tells the story of the natural sponge industry in the United States where it is conducted with all the old world color and culture. It shows the two methods of harvesting, hooking and "hard hat" diving; the sponge auction which features a silent auctioneer, with gestures taking the place of calls; the blessing of the waters and the diving for the Golden Cross. The center of the American sponge industry is Tarpon Springs, Florida, where sponge divers of Greek origin carry on their work in traditional style.

The film was produced by the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Fish and Wildlife Service. It was sponsored by the Sponge and Chamois Institute and the Sponge Industry of Tarpon Springs. Prints are available on a free loan basis from cooperating film libraries throughout the country and from the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Department of the Interior, P. O. Box 128, College Park, Maryland.

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