

THE NORFOLK ANGLERS CLUB

WIRELINE

APRIL 2021

What's Inside

Guest Speaker: RecFish, developing a new APP for Anglers of every experience level. Lisa Kellogg, PhD, Virginia Institute of Marine Science

Fishing Tips; Surf Fishing with Kelly Hoggard

Fishing Reports;

- Elizabeth River: Speckled Trout
- Lynnhaven: Puppy Drum
- James River: Blue Catfish
- Surf Fishing/Hatteras: Shark, Roundhead, Sand Perch
- CBBT: Oyster Toadfish
- Freshwater/Nottoway River: Shad
- Florida Keys/Snook, Jack Crevalle
- Michigan/Ice Fishing: Perch, Walleye

Angler Interest:

- VMRC establishes possession limits on Spot and Croaker
- Lynnhaven River Ecosystem Restoration Project begins
- SAFMC chooses Preferred Management Measures for Dolphin and Wahoo

Leadership Notes...

Fellow Norfolk Anglers,

We're excited to have Lisa Kellogg joining us for our April Zoom meeting to share a project VIMS is working on. The RecFish project sounds interesting and she'll be sharing what it's all about and how we can support the project.

- Will



On The Cover:

This month's Cover photo comes from Capt Alex Perez, with Hook Shot Fishing. Alex caught this image of the reef balls loaded on the barge for the Lynnhaven Ecosystem Restoration Project.



Meeting

Guest Speaker: RecFish, developing a new APP for Anglers of every experience level with M. Lisa Kellogg, PhD., Virginia Institute of Marine Science

Imagine if you could point your cell phone camera at a fish and instantly know its species, size, whether it is legal to keep, and whether it is edible. Then imagine being able to tap a single button to log your catch and, if you choose, contribute data on your catch to improve future fisheries science and management. At RecFish, we are working towards building a free app that will do exactly that. We are committed to developing an app that is accurate, user-friendly and so useful that it will become a valued part of every fishing trip you take.

Join us on Zoom, Monday April 12 at 7:00pm. To request a link to the meeting just email Wendy at NorfolkAnlgersClubEditor@gmail. Provide your name and email and she'll confirm and send a link a few hours before the meeting. She'll open the meeting about 30 minutes before the start time. There's nothing to download and no access code to enter.

Important:
April 12 NAC Meeting will be on Zoom!

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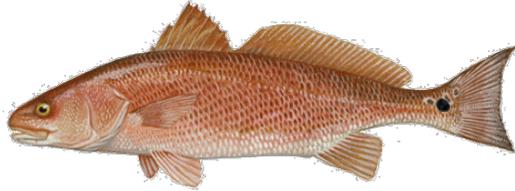
Norfolk Anglers Club

P.O. Box 8422

Norfolk, Virginia 23503-0422



Club Members Tournament for 2021



Redfish "Spots" Tournament

Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021
- Must have the Norfolk Anglers Club decal in the photo with the fish on a measuring device* showing the total length of the fish. See NAC Prize Fish Contest Rules for measuring info. *Entries received with decal and no measurement can only be judged by number of spots.
- Red Drum/Redfish up to 26 inches in length only and caught in Virginia and North Carolina waters
- Awards determined by 1st: number of Spots, 2nd: Largest Fish up to 26 inches, 3rd: Date of Catch
- Entries submitted on the Club Prize Fish Entry Form with photo (can be sent electronically to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com)
- No entry fee except the cost of the decal (\$1)
- \$50.00 Gift Card to the 1st Place Angler, \$25.00 Gift Card for the 2nd Place Angler.



Oyster Toadfish Tournament

Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021
- Awards determined by Total Weight and then by date of catch
- Additional Award for Best Oyster Toad Photo
- Entries submitted by email to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com in the form of a Fishing Report; who was fishing, stating total weight, with photo
- Weighing need not be on a certified scale and may be done by the angler, just try and avoid weighing fish on a pitching boat
- No entry fee (we would never charge a fee for catching Toads)
- 1st Place, 2nd Place, and Best Photo Winners get a Non-Tipping Oyster Toad Can Cooler from Oyster Toad Outfitters
- Winners will be determined by our Tournament Director

"AJ" Perez, the Oyster Toadfish Tournament Director (OTTD)



OysterToads - Did you Know?

✓ In 1998, NASA sent the oyster toadfish into space to investigate the effects of microgravity on the development of otolithic organs. The study found little difference between terrestrial development and those in space.

Norfolk Anglers Club

www.norfolkanglersclub.com

Fishing Tips...



Surf Fishing with Kelly Hoggard

The opportunities for surf fishing abound in our area, from the southern end of the Virginia Beach ocean front to Cape Hatteras you can find surf anglers almost anytime during the year. While surf fishing along coastal Virginia area slows in mid-winter, along the North Carolina Outer Banks surf anglers can enjoy a 10-11 month season.



To get started in surf fishing Kelly shared anglers don't need to invest in a lot of expensive equipment. While anglers can certainly choose expensive rods and reels, it's important to remember that you're going to subject your fishing gear to lots of saltwater, sand, and abuse. Kelly will select the Penn Battle®, Spinfisher® or Slammer® spinning reels in the 4000-5000 class. Kelly shared your spinning reel is likely going to be the most expensive piece of gear you have, it needs to have the line capacity (300 yards minimum) and able to take a moderate amount of abuse from salt and sand during the season. He added to remember to clean your gear after every fishing trip and get your reels serviced regularly, sometimes twice a season if you fish frequently. Rods are generally 8-12 feet in length and can be found \$50-\$100, higher quality rods like the St. Croix brand fall into the \$150-\$250 price range.

Braid, Monofilament, or Fluorocarbon

For surf anglers the answer can be YES to all three. While some surf anglers like to use monofilament as their main line, Kelly prefers a braided line product. His preference is Daiwa's 20# J-Braid™ X8 Grand. He shared, the J-Braid™ X8 Grand is stronger for the same line class than other braided line products and hold up far better against the abrasion surf fishing causes on line. The crashing surf, shells, and sand take their toll on line and rigs. In his experiences with monofilament, the constant abrasion weakens the mono and results in more breakoffs. With other braided line products he's found them to chafe more easily and while stronger than monofilament, he's respooling line more often due to chafe.

Monofilament is the less expensive line option for surf anglers however, its stretch during casting and susceptibility to chafing in the sand/surf make it a second choice.

Fluorocarbon line is usually reserved for leaders and preparing surf rigs. It's more costly than monofilament but is superior to monofilament when it comes to resisting chafing and has far less stretch. If selecting monofilament, 25# test is the heaviest you want to use.



Other Surf Fishing Gear

Unlike fishing on a boat, surf fishing requires you to bring ALL your stuff with you. Items to think about for your surf bag; Gloves, Flashlight, First Aid Kit, Scissors, Pliers, Tackle Trays, and Bag. Forget the Net! You're going to be handling your catch with your hands, remember the gloves! Whether it's teeth, scales, spines, gill rakers, you'll



be glad you have a pair of gloves. A good headlamp and a small first aid kit to handle minor cuts and abrasions are needed items as well. Your tackle trays for lures/pre-made rigs, and rigging supplies for creating additional rigs will all come in handy. Don't forget to get a good bag or backpack to haul around your gear. Being able to relocate along the beach is important and you need to be somewhat mobile. Many areas don't allow vehicle beach access, if you need it during the day, you must pack it in and out.

Rigging for Surf Fishing

The first thing to consider are your choice of sinkers. When it comes to fishing in the surf, you want to keep your rigs where you cast them. Select sinkers that can be cast (not too heavy for your line class) and resist rolling around in the surging surf and currents. Pyramid sinkers (3 sided with a concave face) are the "go to" sinker and the "Sputnik" sinker with its multiple wire legs to hold position are the best. Typical boat sinkers, like bank or bell weights, don't work for surf fishing. Bank and Bell sinkers will roll around and quickly turn your rigs into a tangled mess. The common 4 sided pyramid sinkers will hold better than bell/bank sinkers but can also move around in heavy surf conditions.



Shock Leaders

Though Kelly doesn't tie a shock leader to his rigs for most surf fishing applications, they do serve a valuable purpose. When using thin braid without a shock leader you can be cut very easily during the cast. Kelly recommends with braid or a 20# or larger monofilament leader to tighten down the drag to prevent the line from slipping during the cast. The monofilament shock leader is much less likely to cut your finger during your cast. Once the cast is made remember to lighten the drag setting before placing the rod in a sand spike or holder.

Surf Rigs

There's a seemingly endless selection of surf rigs, there's rigs for bluefish, some for spot or pompano, others for kingfish, they all have a similar characteristics. They are mostly a double drop loop and incorporate a float. The

float is important in surf fishing. As Kelly explains, the float keeps the bait off the bottom and prevents it from being buried in the sand. As the wave crash down it stirs up a lot of sand and bait laying on the bottom would quickly become buried without the float tied in the rig. These small floats come in various shapes, sizes, and colors. Kelly points out that there's a float available with markings similar to a coquina shell,

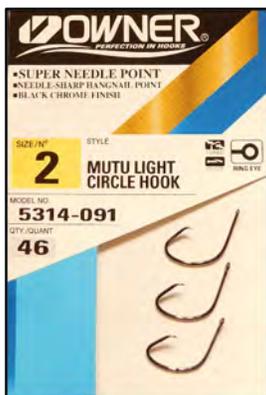


which is a small saltwater clam found along the eastern seaboard from New Jersey to Florida. Most commercially available rigs have their floats secured with a small crimp. A tip Kelly shared when preparing your own rigs was to insert a toothpick into the float and along the line to hold it in place much like a bobber stop. Then break off the toothpick once the float position is where you want it.

Tying your own rigs

When first starting out surf fishing purchasing commercially available surf rigs isn't a bad way to start. There's plenty of selections from MAWS Tails, Sea Striker, and Tsunami. Once you've gained some experience in the types of rigs that work for you, you can create your own style. As mentioned,

Kelly prefers fluorocarbon line for tying all his rigs. It's more abrasion resistant, more difficult to see in clear water, and stiffer. His choice of hooks for nearly all his rigs is the Mutu Light Circle Hook by Owner®. Owner hooks are extremely sharp, high quality hooks. The most common size hook is Size 2. The Mutu hook is a wide gap hook that sort of resembles a cross between a circle hook and a khale hook. Like a traditional circle hook the hook point is oriented perpendicular to the hook shank while incorporating the wide gap of a khale hook.



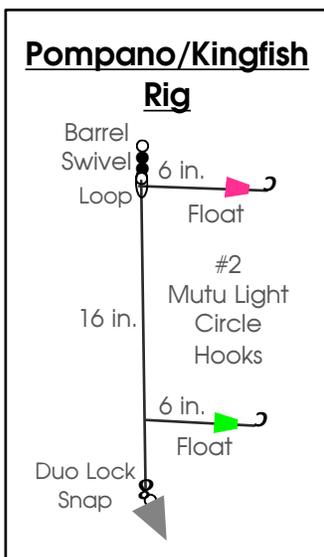
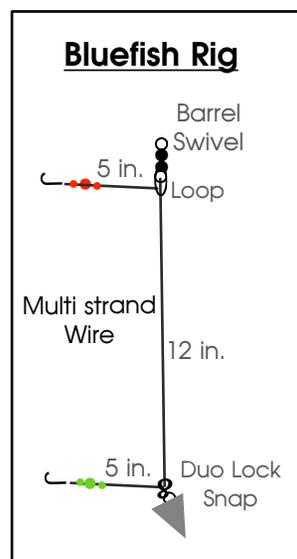
Preparing your rigs

There's lots of commercially available surf fishing rigs on the market however, many anglers choose to tie their own. With a few rigging supplies and some time you can create rigs that suit your style of fishing. The standard for Kelly's rigs is fluorocarbon leader material, 20# to 30# works best. Except for instances where a larger or stronger hook (think Bluefish) is needed the Owner® Mutu Light Circle Hook, Size 2, is his choice. He shared that the Mutu hook works for nearly all species you'll target in the surf. While it may appear to be a lightweight hook, he shared that he's caught sizable puppy drum with it.

While fluorocarbon is stiffer and a bit stronger than monofilament, they usually won't hold up long with hungry bluefish. The bluefish's razor sharp teeth will quickly part your line with only a few tugs. Here's where multi strand wire comes in the picture. Select a lightweight class of multi strand wire and either tie or crimp your rig together. His bluefish rigs will be about 12 inches in length with 5 in. drop tied at the top and bottom of the rig. On each drop he'll add a couple of beads and a float to keep the bait off the bottom. The Duo Lock snap makes changing out sinkers fast and easy. Bait the rig with a piece of cut bait and cast it out past the breaking waves or the outflow cut.

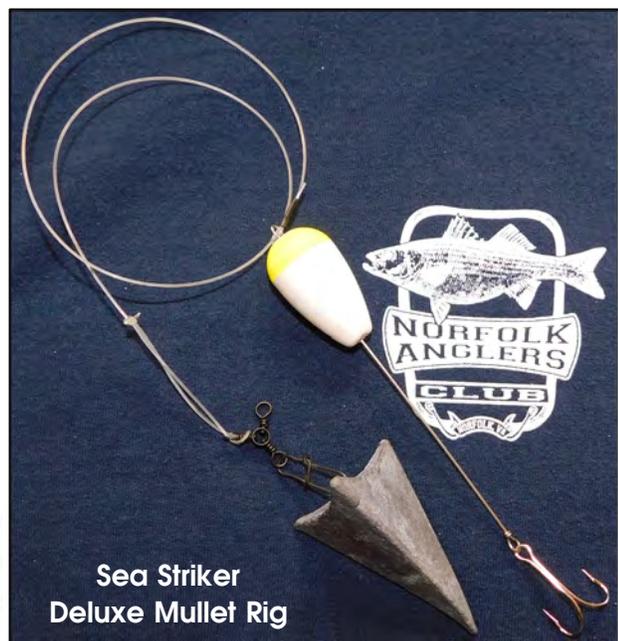
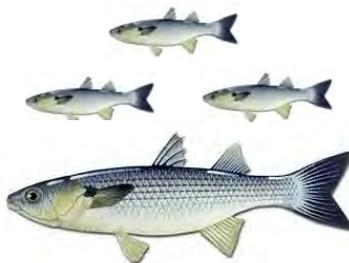
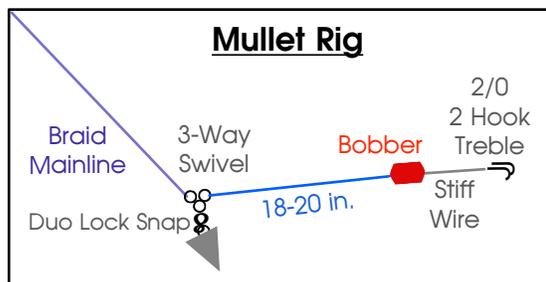


Sea Striker
"Fireball" Bluefish Rig



Perhaps the most utilitarian rig is the Pompano/Kingfish (Roundhead) rig. It too is a double dropper rig with a little bit longer drop and the Owner® Mutu circle hooks. Circle hooks are perfect for surf fishing as they're designed to work their way to the corner of the fish's mouth before setting. In the turbulent surf, you're not likely to "feel the bite" and set a common J-hook so, circle hooks are necessary. Once set, they're not likely to pull free. Rigs are tied with fluorocarbon line and feature a small float. Bait these rigs with cut bait and sand fleas (Mole Crabs).

Unlike many species rigs, "Mullet rigs" are not designed for catching mullet, they're for fishing *with* mullet. When talking about mullet, anglers will generally refer to mullet as "finger mullet" or "Cob mullet", the difference being their size. Finger mullet are the smaller class of mullet and are generally used whole or split for targeting a variety of predatory fish, such as drum, bluefish, flounder, and speckled trout. They're prepared on the mullet rig by first removing the 2 hook treble hook and inserting the wire down and inside the smaller mullet. Once it extends out of the finger mullet reattach the treble hook and you're ready to fish. The stiff wire makes it easy to rig and will protect the rig from being bitten off by larger bluefish. The bobber keeps the bait off the bottom and is a larger size float than other rigs to keep the heavier bait up.



Sea Striker
Deluxe Mullet Rig

Norfolk Anglers Club

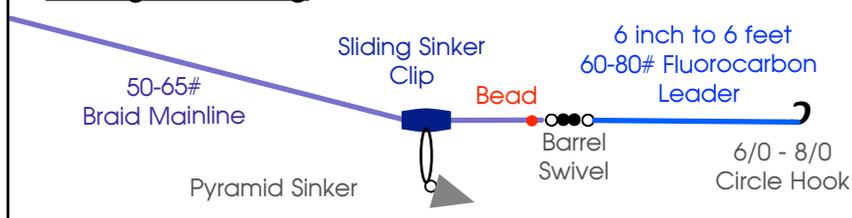
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Fishing Tips...

The larger Cob mullet are usually cut into chunks for targeting the larger species, like citation sized drum, sharks, and larger bluefish. The sliding sinker rig is ideal for targeting the larger drum with chunks of Cob mullet.

The sliding sinker rig allows the pyramid sinker to hold position on the bottom while the mainline slides through the slide. The barrel swivel keeps

Sliding Sinker Rig



the leader from getting twisted up in the surf and the single bead attached to the mainline protects the knot securing the barrel swivel. The leader length can be very short, a little as 6 inches, or rather lengthy at 6 feet. Because you're targeting larger fish the hook size increases to a 6/0 to 8/0 size circle hook. The mainline strength is also increased to 50 to 65 pound braid and the leader to 60-80 pound fluorocarbon.

In addition to presenting cut bait, there's artificial lures to consider. In the surf you'll want to present artificials with a lot of flash. For targeting spanish mackerel, bluefish, and bonito Kelly will cast a 2 ounce casting lure with a #4 treble hook on a 3-4 ft fluoro leader. The retrieve is fast and is meant to mimic a fleeing fish. Too fast isn't a problem Kelly shares. You're targeting mackerel, blues, and bonito



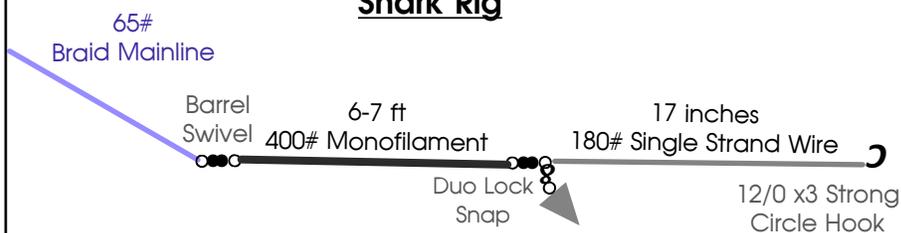
that you generally troll at greater than 6 knots. He added, bright colors are best and the reflective strip on the sides of the lure helps draw attention of predatory fish. 10-15# braid is better for casting distance and feel with lures. The further out you can cast is better for you to work the lure into the feeding zone.



Shark fishing is another aspect of surf fishing, whether as a targeting species or a by-catch, sooner or later you're going to hook one. For those who aren't targeting sharks, the fight will usually be over quick. To target these powerful fish start with 65# braided line as your mainline. Attach a 600# barrel swivel and a Duo Lock Snap for your sinker. From the barrel swivel crimp a 6-7 ft shock leader of 400# monofilament to another barrel swivel with another crimp. From the second swivel use a haywire twist to secure 17 inches of Malin 180# Hard-Wire and another haywire twist to attach a 12/0 Mustad Demon Perfect® x3 Strong In-Line Circle Hook. Cob mullet is an ideal bait for shark fishing. Kelly advises to be careful handling sharks and release them quickly and safely. Be sure to check the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA) regulations regarding required federal permits and fishing for and retaining sharks.



Shark Rig



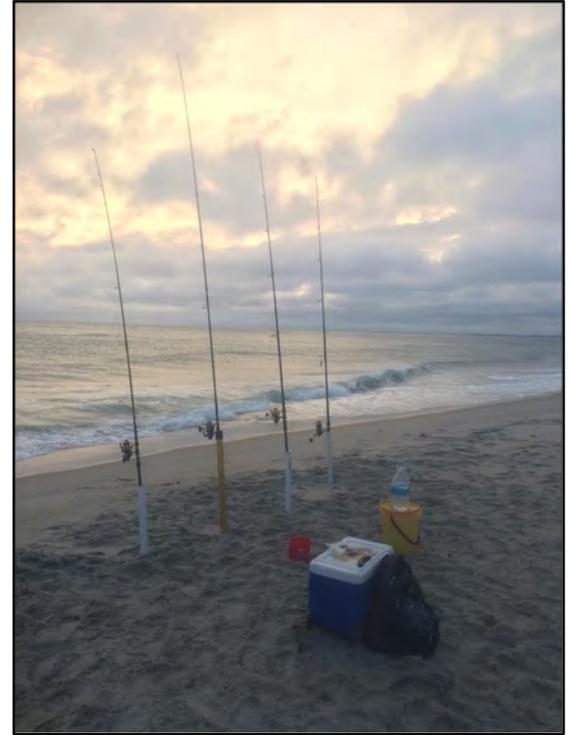
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Fishing Tips...

When it comes to bait, as they say, Fresh is Best! When you have the opportunity always go with the freshest bait you can find. For most surf fishing species Kelly recommends digging up sand fleas. They're a food source all the surf species eat and most months of the year they're readily available. All you need to do is scoop up some sand at the water's edge and you can find them.

Sand fleas or mole crabs are small crustaceans that burrow into the sand in the area where the water washes up and then recedes. If you look carefully in this zone you may see the tell-tail signs of their antennae sticking up in the smooth sand. Dig down and grab a couple of handfuls of sand and you'll find sand fleas but be quick! Sand fleas can burrow back down in the soft sand quickly. They're also harmless, don't bite or pinch, they do however, make a great bait!



Look closely as the waves retreat for the small sand fleas.

Each time the waves roll up on the beach the sand fleas must dig down or reposition themselves. Their actions leave a small disturbance in the sand. Once you know what to look for, it's easy to spot them. Grab a bunch and keep them in a small container.

If you look closely you'll see their digging limbs, which they use to borrow backwards into the sand. To prepare them for bait, simply insert your hook in from the rear. It may take a few tries to figure out the best hook position. Kelly recommends watching your bait as you cast to make sure it doesn't fly off the hook.

Kelly shared casting a surf rod is more about technique than power. Trying too hard can often cause your bait to come free. You'll find with more experience you'll increase your casting accuracy and range with good technique. He recommended keeping your drag tight for only the cast, to keep the braid from slipping and cutting your finger. Before you place your rod in the sand spike remember to lighten up the drag so the rod/reel doesn't get knocked down and dragged in the water by a large fish. Try and keep your line high and clear of the waves. Kelly uses a 48 inch metal sand spike for his rod holders. You can make your own from PVC or get them at your tackle shop.



Reading the Surf and Selecting a Fishing Spot

Surf Anglers are always watching the waves as they approach the shore. They're observing how the swell moves toward the beach, when it first crests on the sand bar, then as the water flows in to the beach and again as it retreats seaward. They're reading the surf line to determine where the bar is located, where the breaks form, and the location of relatively calmer water between the sand and the cresting waves. Look for areas where the water is stirred up and where there's clean water, fish the clean water.

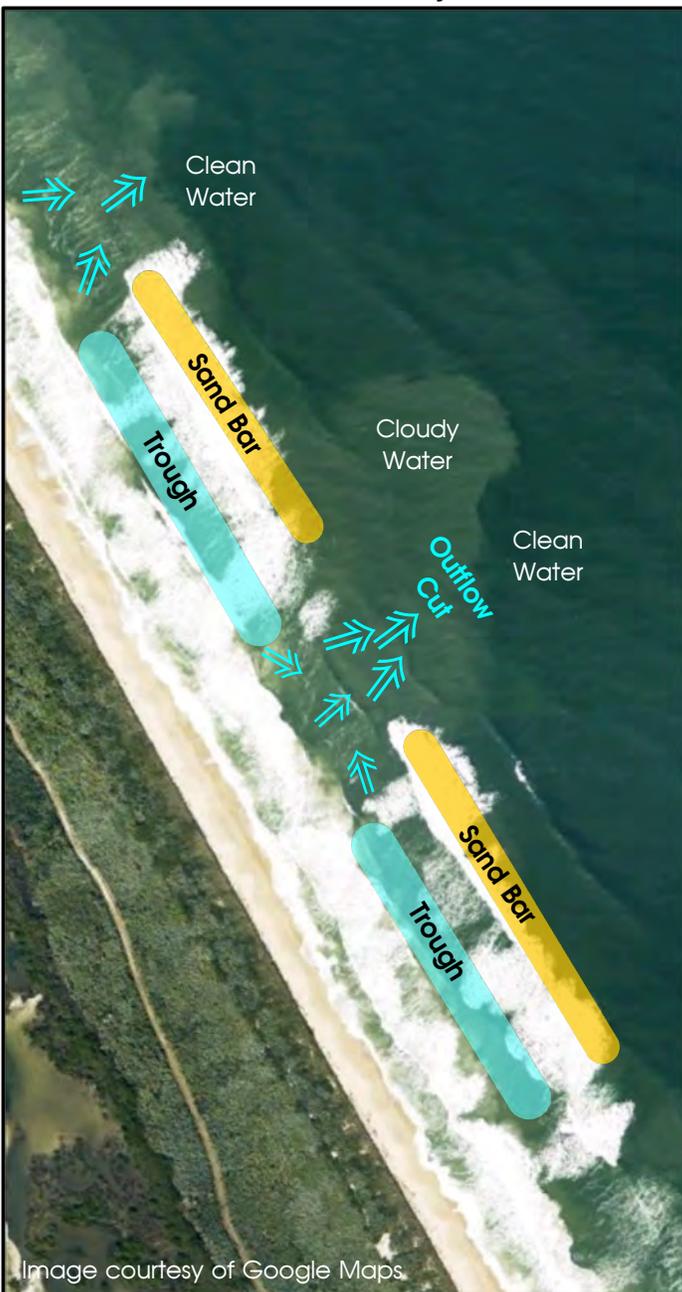


Areas where the wave crest identifies where the sand bar exists and there can be more than one parallel to the beach. As the water moves away from the beach it will form cuts in the bar. Anglers can identify these areas

by the lack of waves cresting as the swells move toward the beach. These cut areas are deeper water and carry the water away from the beach. They can often be identified by the stirred up or dirtier water outflowing away from the beach. These areas are where rip currents form and while bad for swimmers they are good areas for surf anglers.

After the swells break on the bar it forms an area of calmer water known as the trough. As the waves move up the sand and recedes the water moves along the beach until it exists one of the deeper cut areas.

Surf anglers will target fish on the oceanside of the sand bar, in the trough, and the outflow cut. Roundhead spot/croaker, pompano, flounder, speckled trout, and puppy drum he'll usually find them in the calmer waters in front of the sand bar. Just past the sand bar before the wave crest is an area where he'll target bluefish, spanish mackerel, and bonito. Also on the outside of the sand bar is where you'll find the citation drum and sharks. While these are general areas to begin fishing for those species, Kelly advises, that you'll sometimes find the larger fish in the calmer waters inside of the sand bar. He advised to try different tactics in other areas of the surf. What works one day may not work on another day.



Fishing Reports...



March in Key Largo: One of our charters was with Captain Jeremy, Ankle Deep Fishing Adventures in Key Largo. We had a 6 hour venture into the Everglades, which started with catching bait (pilchards) in the middle of nowhere. Apparently fishing spots aren't as much of a secret as where to catch the best bait (according to the Captain). With two cast of the net, we had more bait than we could ever use. With live bait, it was now time to hit the spots to catch fish. Our first spot yielded several snooks. An alligator decided to visit our location, and we wanted to upgrade in size snooks we landed, so we moved. The next spot yielded more snooks and jack crevales. Another move, and we again caught jacks, snooks but found where tarpon were hiding.



Our gear consisted of a 3/0 hook, with a small egg sinker (nosehooked) or freelined (tail hooked) depending on whether we were fishing a ledge by mangroves or wanted our bait to swim into the mangrove roots. All in all, a great day catching fish!

If you get to Key Largo, look up Captain Jeremy with Ankle Deep Fishing Adventures. Mention my name and he will probably charge you more, so use discretion.

- Joseph Miller



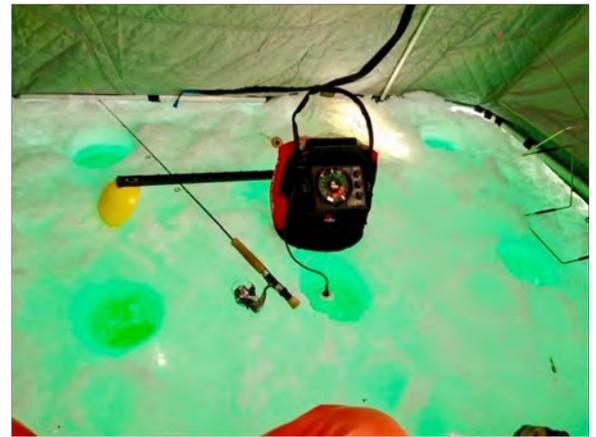
ICE FISHING

While fishing the 1st week of February at Marathon, Florida with 85 degrees, Troy Lane, a recent transplant from Michigan, invited me to accompany him on an Ice Fishing Trip. On February 3, we were on the road arriving in his home town of Colon, Michigan, 12 hours later. We spent the night at his friend's and in the morning gathered up the snowmobile, shanty, and a truck load of equipment. Four hours later, we arrived at Saginaw Bay on Lake Huron, with ice as far as you could see. This trip involved about 6 of Troy's buddies, and a young daughter and son. Thursday morning, we headed out on the ice. We fished 3 days 6:00 am to 7-8:00 pm, traveling in the dark out and in. A totally new and exciting experience for me. We fished 10 miles out, ice 10"-12" thick. The trip involving jumping 2 foot cracks with the snowmobiles and finding spots to get around 6 foot cracks. Friday, we couldn't find a spot to cross, ran back in, loaded up the equipment, and trailer to another launch site an hour away. We fished with 2 1/2 inch spoons and ice jigs tipped with just the head of a shinner. Fishing was slow, which was blamed on the full moon. Thursday and Friday, we only caught a couple perch and 1 walleye.

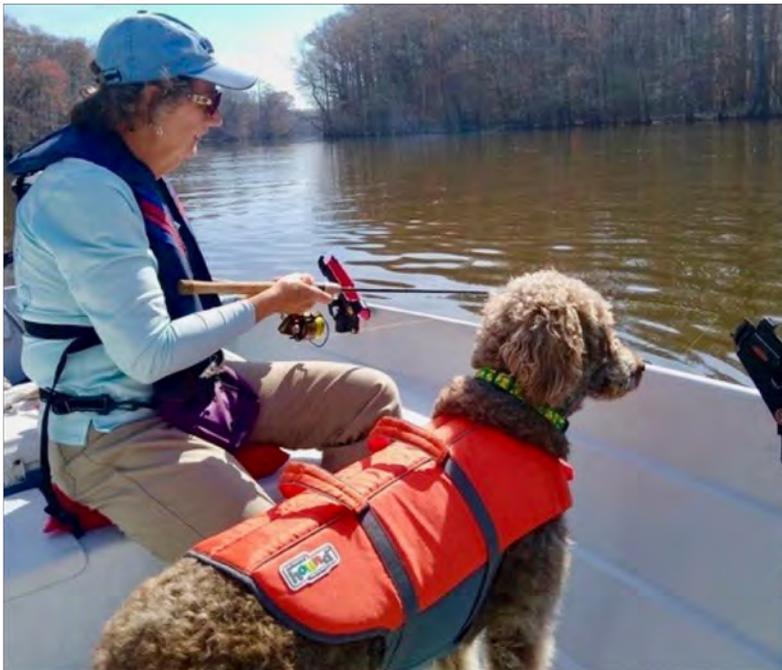


Saturday was much better. We caught 4 big perch, 4 walleye all about 22 inches and 1 short. Fantastic experience, amazing how the ice glowed green and visibility in the water was over 15 feet.

- Henry Troutner



March 12: Mary, Evy the Fishing Dog and I hit the Nottoway River in our skiff for the shad run. As usual, it did not disappoint. During 3 hours of fishing, we caught 40 or 50 shad, releasing all but a dozen which I freeze for bait. These fish are a blast to catch on light spinning gear. They hit hard, fight well and occasionally jump. We used standard shad darts. Color didn't seem to matter as I used green and yellow. Mary used white with a pink stripe. FYI - The Nottoway River is not a spot for a 20 foot Center Console. Although 6 to 10 feet deep, it has stumps and down trees in the water.



***AS A SIDE NOTE:
EVY THE FISHING
DOG SAYS ALWAYS
WEAR YOUR PFD.***

– Henry Troutner

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25 March: I had a pelican in my creek with a shad stuck in his throat. He could not get it turned around to swallow headfirst. It was sticking out by his mouth with the tail out. I have lived here since 1984. *First time I have ever seen a pelican in my Creek. Global warming? I made my limit on this day!*



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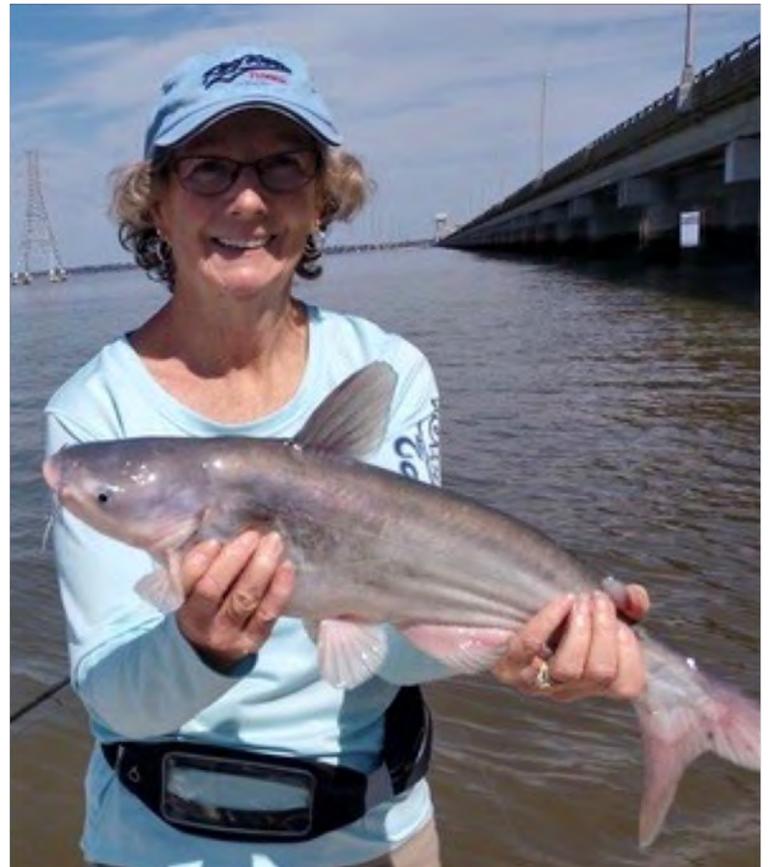
SEA TOW



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9 March: 70 degrees and sunny, a perfect day to fish. Mary and I fished with John Curry at the JRB for catfish. Having read an article making and using Jello/Garlic/Chicken for bait we mixed up a batch and headed out. We also, had some frozen shad, shrimp and white perch. The bite was steady and the Jello/Garlic/Chicken was the catfish's choice with about 85 percent of the catch on it. As usual, Mary was the high hook with about 12, John had 6 or 8 and I only landed 2.

All were a good size for eating if you're into catfish, but we released all we caught. - Henry Troutner



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27 March: It is with great honor that the first fish for the new year on the Hook Shot is an Oyster Toadfish. Make that the second fish for the new year as well.

I ran to the third island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) and anchored on the spine of the tunnel in 35 foot of water. There was a strong incoming current that made 10 ounces of lead barely hang on. After an hour of no bites, I relocated to Mike's Rubble pile in 40 foot of water. Using Fiddler Crabs, I caught two Oyster Toadfish with the larger weighing 2.1 pounds. Both were released unharmed. Overall, the fishing was slow with the bay water temperatures between 47 and 49 degrees.

- Alex Perez

22 MAR: Mary, John Curry and I hit the Nottoway River for Shad. The weather was beautiful, but we had to contend with strong wind gusts from every direction. The fishing was a little slow, but we still caught a dozen or so. As usual, Mary was the high hook catching at least half of the total. Not sure if the run is winding down or last week's miserable weather put a dampener on things.



All were caught on various color shad darts, and all were released except 4, which John kept for catfish bait.

- Henry Troutner



12 March: I caught a couple in the creek today. I pulled off a couple and had a couple more hits.

- Jimmy Robinson

14 March: They're getting bigger, 27 inches. Got a lot today, 7 plus?

I lost count and only kept two keepers.



surf fishing Hatteras - March 14 and 15, 2021

I made a couple of day trips down to Cape Hatteras to surf fish during a fairly nice weather window in mid-March. I went on Sunday.

14 MAR: Sunday was a beautiful day with a light west wind. Water temperature had soared during a recent south wind that pushed 65 plus degree water along the southern beaches. I brought a full complement of rods including one of my new shark rods and 3 of my standard surf fishing rigs. I had not thrown the shark rod yet since purchase and needed to test it out. My shark rod is a 13-foot Rainshadow 1509 blank with a Penn Slammer III 10500 reel spooled with 700 yards of 65# braid. My other surf gear has been sitting since thanksgiving and was eager use it all.

I walked down to the beach to cast my shark rig and it was bit before getting the rod to the sand spike. The shark dropped the bait so I set it back down and worked on my camera for streaming. Less than a minute later, the rod bent over again. This time I was hooked up with a sizeable shark. Initially I put 14# of drag on the shark but lost more than three hundred yards of line. I was a little surprised by the amount of fight the shark provided. Most of the sharks I've encountered before are sand bars and black tips and neither fights very long on that heavy of a drag setting. I tightened down to 23# of drag and got the shark turned around. The fight officially began. I battled for about 15 minutes before beaching a personal best 98-inch Scalloped Hammerhead Shark! This shark represented my largest to date, the first hammerhead of any size I've caught and was caught on the first cast with my new shark rig! I had numerous more bites and runs throughout the day but only hooked and beached three of them. They measured 98 inches, 96 inches, and 95 inches. My attempts to catch some dinner failed miserably. The roundhead and puffer bite were very furious but most all were too small to get the bait and hook. I caught a handful in the 5-to-8-inch range and one solid 11.5-inch roundhead that was my only takeaway for dinner. It was an amazing day for only a three-hour fishing session on the beach



18 MAR: Thursday was a significantly different day. A north wind during the week had made the water dirty and was much cooler, around 60 degrees. The winds were light around sunrise, but the forecast was for a heavy 20 knot south wind to start around 11:00 am. I set up around 7:15 am in the morning right as I could see the sun rising through the clouds. This time around, I brought one shark rod and two standard surf rigs. I managed to get all three rods in the water without a single bite.

I got some tugs on my smaller bottom rigs but the only fish I managed in this case was a couple sand perch. Around 10:30 am, a light shower came through and that wind turned to the south. The water immediately began to clear up and I started getting more action on the shark rig.

There were some very odd bites that acted much like a stingray. The bite would be very lazy and docile and would swim slowly away or down the beach. This is odd as most sharks tend to pick up the bait and run fast and furious. To counter the lack of aggression, I decided to free spool the bait to the fish to find out if I could hook it. I felt a couple of unnerving tugs and set the drag. This time, the line came tight and I was hooked up! The shark immediately jumps half way out of the water. I couldn't tell at first what kind of shark it was. I had the 23# drag set again expecting this shark to be much of the same but this lazy shark swam almost straight up to the beach. I played for a short time and got the shark up and immediately knew what it was. My first confirmed Sand Tiger Shark catch! It measured out at 92 inches. Sand Tiger Sharks also have a nickname of the ragged tooth shark. The teeth are lined all over the mouth in various directions. While other sharks primarily bite their prey and saw it into pieces, the Sand Tiger Shark will use its mouth and teeth to snag and swallow food.

Throughout the rest of the day, I had little luck except for the predators. I managed 2 other Sand Tigers that measured 83 inches and 101 inches. The 101-inch shark represents a new personal best! I also snuck in a decent southern ray, a skate, and one smaller Sand Bar Shark about 22-24 inches. I left the beach after the surf conditions deteriorated too much. I spent about 5 hours on the beach this day with little to bring home. I'm looking forward to the bite picking up as soon as the water warms again. This north east blow has pushed sub-50-degree water all the way past the point. - Kelly Hoggard



27 MAR: John Curry invited Troy Lane and myself for a morning of catfishing at the Surry Discharge. A beautiful day on the water, although the wind blew up whitecaps as we were heading home.

John got a new 18 foot Tidewater CC last year, and I have been very impressed with the dry ride, and its ability to handle a good chop. We fished for 2.5 hours with a steady catch of more than we kept track of. Troy, a transplant from Michigan, kept a few of the eating size ones to try.

John and I passed, sticking to striper, seabags and tautog for our table. The hot bait was shad we had caught last week but, John did catch the biggest on shrimp. - Henry Troutner



25 MAR: I went fishing in St Julien's Creek and the Elizabeth River. I caught 4 nice ones!
- Jerry Hughes



Norfolk Anglers Club

Angler Interests

Virginia Recreational and Commercial Possession Limits for Spot and Croaker



March 23: At their regular March meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to establish two regulations regarding possession limits for Spot and Croaker. The Commission established a 50 fish recreational possession limit for both Spot and Croaker and an additional 50 live bait allowance for each species for Charter/For-Hire operators. They further approved the establishment of a Commercial season for Spot.

Their actions were in response to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's requirement to reduce recreational and commercial harvest after declining trends in both species.

National Marine Fishery Service (NMFS) Tilefish Permitting:



Recreational fishing for Tilefish requires a NMFS Permit and comes with a reporting requirement. While Golden Tilefish are open all year in our waters, Blueline Tilefish are only open May 1 through October 31st. Last year's Permit is valid through April 2021, but be aware that processing your new permit may take a while. My renewal came in the mail about 30 days after I reapplied - Will

To get your NMFS Tilefish Permit web search or go to the NOAA Fish Online portal at <https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/apps/login/login>. You can log in or create your account to get to Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries Office (GARFO) and request your permit.

Reporting your Tilefish efforts is easy through another APP called eFin.



NOAA Fish OnLine APP

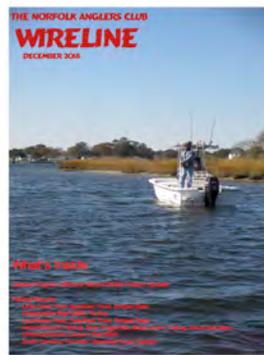


eFin Tilefish Reporting APP

Wanted: Fishing Photos for the Wireline

We're always looking for photos for the cover of the Wireline! Here's a few tips to take great photos of your fishing adventures;

- Vertically orient the camera (portrait)
- Remember to remove your sunglasses/buffs
- Avoid the shadows from rods and rigging
- Take photos with and without camera flash
- Avoid cluttering the photos, keep it simple
- Action photos landing the fish are great!
- Keep the sun behind the camera
- Scenic shots are great too!
- **Take LOTS of PICTURES!**



Angler Interests

Mid-Atlantic Coastal Acidification Network; State-Led OA Action Planning in U.S. Mid-Atlantic



Are you curious about what ocean acidification (OA) is? Are you curious about what a more acidic ocean could mean for the fish you target? Would you like to learn how seagrass plantings can buffer changes in water chemistry and help with oyster reef restoration? Are you eager to try out a new app that provides short-term forecasts for pH and hypoxia in coastal waters?

On April 12, 2021, the MACAN is co-hosting with the OA Alliance, a 60 minute webinar to dive deeper into specific components of OA Action Planning in Maryland, New Jersey, and across U.S. Mid-Atlantic States. Collectively, presentations will touch on partnerships, data, research, projects and policy frameworks that are informing state's OA Action Plan recommendations.

Please register at: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5804464133441407245>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information and about joining the webinar.

Operation Paddle Smart: "If Found" Stickers available



When the Coast guard or local emergency responders receive a report or discover a paddle craft adrift, there is no way to determine if the vessel was washed off of a beach during high tide or was separated from its owner during the course of a boating accident. In these situations, the Coast Guard has to assume the owner is in trouble and needs assistance until it can find evidence to support otherwise. As a result the Coast Guard and local harbor masters spend hundreds of thousands of tax dollars per year searching for potential people in distress when there was no one in danger to begin with.

To combat this growing problem, the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary have launched Operation Paddle Smart. The cornerstone of Paddle Smart is providing owners of kayaks, canoes, standup paddleboards, and other unregistered watercraft a free "If Found" sticker for their boat to help reduce the number of unnecessary search and rescue cases.

The stickers are weatherproof, reflective, and provide room for the vessel owner's name and two phone numbers using a waterproof marker. The "If Found" sticker should be placed in a highly visible location inside the vessel's cockpit or near the operators station. The stickers are weatherproof, reflective, and provide room for the vessel owner's name and two phone numbers using a waterproof marker.

The Norfolk Anglers Club was provided some of these "If Found" stickers by the USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 5-9 from Smithfield, VA. If you would like to have one just send us an email with your name & address to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com. We'll send it to you free!



Angler Interests

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council seeks Applicants for Advisory Panels



The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council is soliciting applications from qualified individuals to serve on nine advisory panels. Advisory panels provide information and recommendations to the Council during the development of fishery management plans, amendments, specifications, and other management measures. One of the chief responsibilities of advisory panels is the development of annual Fishery

Performance Reports. These reports provide the Council and SSC with information about the factors that influenced fishing effort and catch within each fishery during the previous year.

Advisory panels are composed of individuals with diverse experience and interest in Mid-Atlantic fisheries. Members include commercial fishermen, recreational anglers, for-hire operators, commercial dealers, scientists, environmentalists, and other members of the interested public. Most advisory panels meet 1-2 times per year. Members are compensated for travel and per diem expenses for all meetings. Individuals who are appointed to advisory panels serve for three-year terms. All current advisory panel members must reapply in order to be considered for reappointment.

The Council is accepting applications for the following advisory panels:

- Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass
- Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish
- Surfclam and Ocean Quahog
- Tilefish
- Bluefish
- Ecosystem and Ocean Planning
- River Herring and Shad
- Spiny Dogfish (jointly managed with New England Council)
- Communication and Outreach (see below for details about this new AP)

How to Apply

Anyone interested in serving on an advisory panel may apply online or download an application at www.mafmc.org/advisory-panel-application. Applications can also be obtained by calling (302) 518-1143 or emailing msabo@mafmc.org.

Completed applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 23, 2021.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Mary Sabo at (302) 518-1143, msabo@mafmc.org.

Norfolk Anglers Club

Angler Interests

Lynnhaven River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Project: Reef Habitat

March 8: Great news! Construction of the Lynnhaven River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Project's Phase 1 Reef Habitat begins today in the Lynnhaven River. **Boaters: Be alert for barges and refer to the Notice to Mariners for activities in the area. Signs will be installed for the safety of boaters and residents prior to the start of construction.** USACE and the Virginia Beach City Government are making great strides for a cleaner Lynnhaven River with more fish and oyster habitat diversity.



Angler Interests

SAFMC chooses Preferred Management Measures for Dolphin and Wahoo Fisheries



March 5: During its meeting this week, members of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council chose preferred management alternatives affecting Dolphin and Wahoo harvested in federal waters along the entire Atlantic coast. The proposed measures, as outlined in Amendment 10 to the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan, would reduce the current recreational vessel limit for Dolphin from 60 fish to 48 fish per vessel while maintaining the 10 fish per person/day bag limit and reduce the daily bag limit for Wahoo from 2 fish to 1 fish per

person/day. Reductions in harvest are intended to help prevent seasonal closures that could be imposed should catch levels be exceeded.

Regional differences in the Dolphin and Wahoo fisheries became the focus of discussion as members of the Council reviewed concerns expressed during public hearings held in late January. Fishermen in South Florida and the Keys, including charter captains, have expressed concerns about catching fewer Dolphin and encountering smaller fish over the past few years and have requested the Council take action to reduce harvest. Further north, charter captains and other fishermen have raised objections to the proposed reductions, noting the importance of maintaining higher vessel limits for trips that require much farther runs offshore.

“We’ve heard from constituents and advisory panel members and believe their observations. Looking at the various management scenarios for both Dolphin and Wahoo, the Council compromised to reduce catches while addressing concerns of fishermen dependent on these valuable recreational fisheries,” explained Council Chair Mel Bell. “There are many variables affecting these migratory fisheries, including international harvest, environmental conditions, and other factors. We don’t have a clear sense of what the problem is and we’re being more preventative than curative at this point,” said Bell.

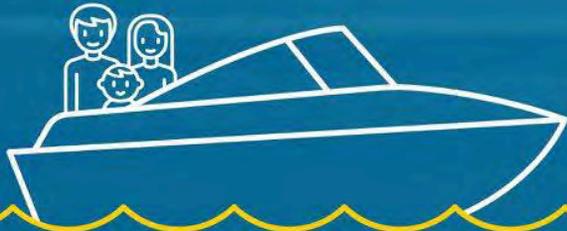
Amendment 10 also includes updates to annual catch limits, modifications to sector allocations, and changes to accountability measures designed to ensure the catch levels are not exceeded for both Dolphin and Wahoo. Proposed management measures would also allow properly permitted commercial fishing vessels with trap, pot or buoy gear onboard to retain up to 500 pounds (gutted weight) of Dolphin and remove the Operator Card requirement for for-hire and commercial fishermen in the Atlantic Dolphin Wahoo fishery. After considering recommendations from its advisory panels and public comment, the Council removed an action that would have allowed filleting Dolphin at sea on for-hire vessels in federal waters north of the NC/VA border. The Council is scheduled to approve Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 for review by the Secretary of Commerce during its June meeting.

Other Business: King Mackerel, Red Porgy, Snowy Grouper and Rock Shrimp Fishery Access Area

The Council continued work on management measures addressing Atlantic migratory group King Mackerel to address the recent stock assessment update that found the stock is not overfished or undergoing overfishing. The measures, originally included in Framework Amendment 10 and now Amendment 34 to the Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plan, would modify annual catch limits and sector allocations, increase the recreational bag limit and possession limits off the coast of Florida, reduce the minimum size limits for both commercial and recreational sectors, and allow retention of “cut off” King and Spanish Mackerel by recreational fishermen as is allowed for the commercial sector. Public hearings on the amendment will be scheduled following the Council’s June meeting.



Social Distancing When Boating



Only boat with those in your immediate household.



No beaching your boat right next to someone else.



Maintain your distance at the fuel dock – and remember to wash your hands.



No rafting up – keep your distance on the water.

No guests on your boat!

This includes family members not in your immediate household or your closest boating buddies.

Go right from your house to the boat and back –

no unnecessary contact with anyone.

Enjoy your boat, the water and the fresh air; but enjoy it while boating responsibly.