



THE NORFOLK ANGLERS CLUB

WIRELINE

APRIL 2026

What's Inside

Guest Speaker: Virginia Saltwater Tournament, Matt Hargis and Virginia Artificial Reef Program, Hunter Smith, Virginia Marine Resources Commission

Fishing Tips: Captain Jason Yost, *Custom Tides Guide Service*, Sight Cast Fishing for Red Drum

Fishing Reports;

- Rudee Inlet: Puppy Drum
- Freshwater/Nottoway River: Hickory Shad, Chain Pickerel

Leadership Notes...

Fellow Norfolk Anglers,

Finally! Warm weather is making an appearance in our area. I hope you get out and get some fishing opportunities in April. We're starting to get fishing reports and Club Prize Fish Tournament entries. Go to our club website and print off some copies of the Prize Fish Form, go fishing, take photos, write up a fishing report for the newsletter, and send those tournament entries to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com

Will



On The Cover: A great red drum photo from Capt Jason Yost with *Custom Tides Guide Service*. Jason was our Guest Speaker last month and shared some great tips on sight casting for red drum and is featured in this month's fishing tips article.

Meeting



Guest Speaker: Matt Hargis and Hunter Smith with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission

This month we have a double header for our guest speaker. We have Matt Hargis joining us to share the changes to the Virginia Saltwater Tournament and the Virginia Junior Expert Angler Awards Program. We also have Hunter Smith with the Artificial Reef Program to share what's planned for the Virginia artificial reefs.

Important:
April 20th, 2026 at 7:00pm
NAC Meeting at Boil Bay
Seafood City, Norfolk,

Publishers NOTES

Editor:
Wendy Bransom
NorfolkAnglersClubEditor@gmail.com

NAC OFFICERS

President:
Will Bransom

Vice President:
Henry Troutner

Treasurer:
Mike Hubert

Awards Program:
Ike Eisenhower

Events Coordinator:

Assistant Events Coordinator:
Wesley Waters

Membership:

Member at Large:
Alex Perez, Sr.

Webmaster:
Pat Hirsch
pfhirsch@yahoo.com

Contact us at;
NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com
Norfolk Anglers Club
P.O. Box 8422
Norfolk, Virginia 23503-0422



Club Calendar

April

Mon, Apr 20th; Norfolk Anglers Club Regular Meeting
Boil Bay Seafood City, Norfolk

Tue, Apr 21st; Virginia Marine Resources Commission
meeting, 380 Fenwick Rd, Ft Monroe, VA

May

Mon, May 18th; Norfolk Anglers Club Regular Meeting
Boil Bay Seafood City, Norfolk

Tue, May 26th; Virginia Marine Resources Commission
meeting, 380 Fenwick Rd, Ft Monroe, VA

Thank You!

Our flea market Volunteers did an outstanding job representing the club! Many THANKS to Mike Hubert, Henry & Mary Troutner!



Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish Entries
1 January - 31 March 2026

Freshwater		Saltwater	
Species	Name (#Entries)	Species	Name (#Entries)
Crappie	Russell Willoughby (2)	Speckled Trout	Stan Simmerman (1)
Largemouth Bass	Russell Willoughby (2)		
Chain Pickerel	Mike Rheinhardt (1)		
White Perch	Andy Reid (1)		

For the 2026 Tournaments, ALL entries need to be submitted to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com

Documentation from Virginia or North Carolina Fisheries or Wildlife agencies, as well as, the Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish paperwork is acceptable.

****Virginia Saltwater Tournament (Saltwater) or Department of Wildlife Resources (Freshwater) Citation paperwork or the Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish entry form must be submitted to James "Ike" Eisenhower via email to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com



**Speckled Trout
Club Members Tournament
March - December 2026**

Revised Tournament Dates for 2026

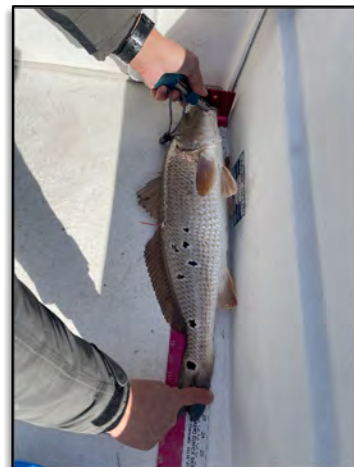
- This is a Norfolk Anglers Club Members tournament running from March 1st until December 31st
- Targeted Species is Speckled Trout (any length)
- Total Length Tournament Only
- \$10 Entry Fee due *before* fishing
- For fish caught in Virginia and/or North Carolina waters only
- Winner determined by; 1. Total Length of fish, 2. Date of Catch, 3. Date of entry submission
- 1st Place \$50 Gift Card and 2nd Place \$25 Gift Card
- All fishing must be in accordance with State fishing regulations for recreational anglers
- Entries must be submitted via the Norfolk Anglers Prize Fish Entry Form (Available at www.NorfolkAnglersClub.com and submitted by email to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com



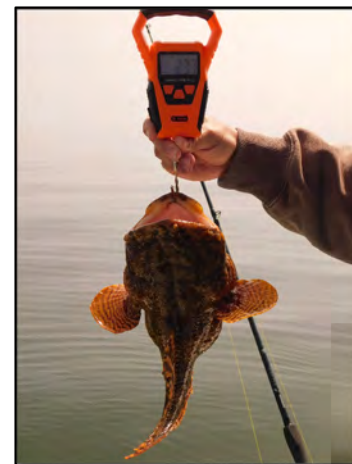
Club Members Tournament for 2026



Redfish "Spots" Tournament Rules



- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2026 and December 31, 2026
- 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. Photo entries without a decal or measurement tape are not accepted.
- 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 (on one side), 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, 2026 and December 31, 2026
- Awards determined by;
 1. Total Weight
 2. Date of catch
 3. Date of entry submission
- Entries submitted by email to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com in the form of a Fishing Report; who was fishing, stating total weight, with photo of the fish on the scale
- Weighing need not be on a certified scale and may be done by the angler, just try an avoid weighing fish on a pitching boat
- No entry fee (we would never charge a fee for catching Toads)
- Winners will be determined by our Tournament Director

Alex "AJ" Perez, Jr.
Oyster Toadfish Tournament Director (TOTTD)





offshore distance MATTERS

Sea Tow® is the only towing membership that doesn't limit offshore distance. Go the extra mile; we're standing by.

ARE YOU A MEMBER?



JOIN NOW & SAVE \$30
SEA TOW HAMPTON ROADS
757-496-1999

Offer expires December 31, 2026. Offer only valid with automatic renewal enrollment.

Awards Banquet



Congratulations! to all our Awardees at the Annual Awards Banquet. We recognized Bill Seemueller as our Freshwater Angler of the Year and Henry Troutner as our Saltwater Angler of the Year. We also recognized three Club Expert Anglers; Dr "Ike" Eisenhower and Russell Willoughby for Black Crappie as well as Mike Rheinhardt for Largemouth Bass.

Special thanks to Mike Hubert, Karen Schrader, Henry & Mary Troutner, Wesley Waters, Terry Waters, Bill Seemueller, Carol Atkinson, LaSalle Webb, Zena, and the Staff of the Norfolk Yacht and Country Club all of which helped with planning, hosting, or setting up the Awards Banquet that we all enjoyed.

Along with recognizing the angling expertise of many of our members, renewing the fellowship of our fishing families, we enjoyed a raffle with donations from local businesses, friends, and families. Our raffle wouldn't have been possible without the generous support from the following;

Sea Tow Hampton Roads, NAPA Auto Parts Green Cove Springs, Princess Anne Distributing Co, Oceans East Bait & Tackle, Tractor Supply Co., Margie & Ray's, Rudee Tours, Atlantic Tacklebox, West Marine, Great Bridge Fishing Association, Southland Restaurant & Catering, Fogo de Chão, Wreck-It-Room, Central Meats, Back Bay Market and Deli, Lancet Marine, Huntley's Place, Heads~N~Tails Charters, Sportsman's Warehouse, ACE Hardware, Aberdeen Barn Steakhouse, Bayside Artisan Shoppes, Academy Sporting Goods, Penn Reels, Wendy & Will Bransom, Mary & Henry Troutner, Terry Waters, Wes Waters, Mike Mancini, Bert Sainz, Greg Rogers & Kim Rote, Alex Perez, Rich Califf, Mike Hubert, BJ Karwatt, Bill Seemueller, Carol Atkinson

SEA TOW®



Rudee TOURS



SOUTHLAND Restaurant & Catering



West Marine® We make boating more fun!®



Heads-N-Tails



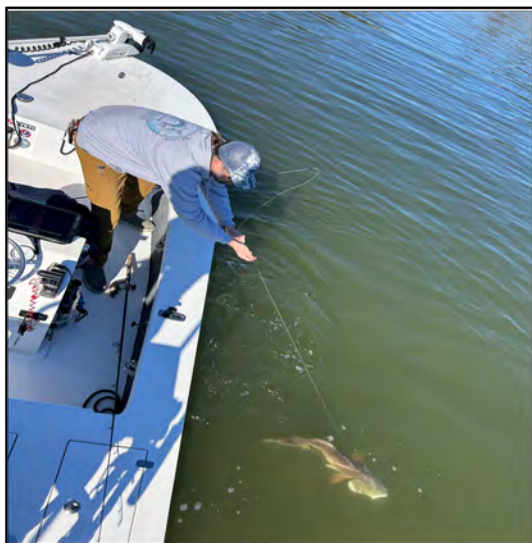
FOGO DE CHÃO



Sight Cast Fishing for Drum

Captain Jason Yost, *Custom Tides Guide Service*

Captain Yost and *Custom Tides Guide Service* operates a Flats Boat in the tributaries and shallows of Hampton Roads and Virginia's Eastern Shore. Anglers can find him fishing year round in the lower James River, fall & winter in Virginia Beach, on the Eastern Shore mid-late summer, and early season on the Poquoson Flats for citation red drum.



Equipped with a poling platform and a push pole he can get in water as shallow as 6 inches, which is a definite advantage on the Eastern Shore and marsh flats in our area.

Selecting a general location involved a bit of local knowledge and planning. If you're not familiar with an area using satellite map feature like the one below can identify key features that would hold the species you're targeting Red Drum like shellfish and grass beds that hold crustaceans, like crabs and shrimp. Baitfish will often hide in the shallow grass beds from predators. The drainage outflows from upland areas and the tidal outflow from marshes are locations where red drum and speckled trout will wait in ambush for baitfish as they're swept out with the ebb tide. Capt Yost recommends looking at the charts for depth soundings and it's an unfamiliar area to explore during the incoming tide. Observe the bird activity; are birds actively feeding in an area,



which would indicate schools of bait. Look for white egrets along the marsh edges. They will be looking to pick off small minnows along the shallow shoreline. Anglers will often see the darker outline of underwater grass beds and these are great places to start looking for drum and especially speckled trout. The coloring of speckled trout allow them to blend with the grass bed, hide from predatory birds, and ambush unsuspecting baitfish.

Norfolk Anglers Club

www.norfolkanglersclub.com

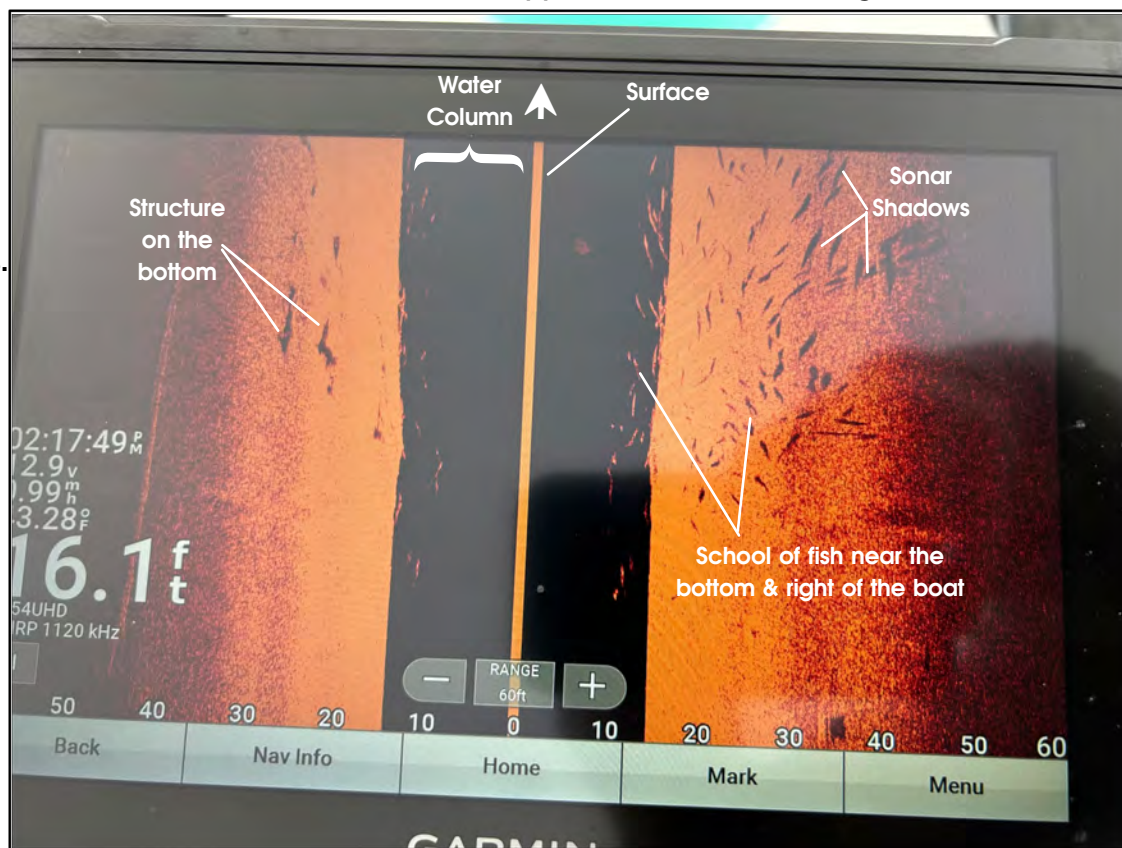
Fishing Tips...

Capt Yost shared that on a calm day in shallow water you may be able to spot the red drum swimming around in the grass beds when they disturb the grass when they swim by or by their tail wakes. When the water is clear and wearing polarized sunglasses you can usually see them moving around in the water column. The red drum's distinctive gold coloring makes them look like a moving sand bar when large drum are grouped in a school. This is particularly true around the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands.



He recommends fishing the deeper areas and structures early in the morning. Look for the oyster beds and pay attention to the water clarity. If you're in very clear water and can easily see the fish, they can also see you! When it's calm water and light winds be mindful of the noise you make on the boat. The noise you make opening tackle boxes, dropping sinkers, music, etc are easily transmitted in the water and can shutdown a bite. Even the motion rocking the boat sends a signal to the fish that something isn't right and can shut down the bite.

The emergence of sidescan and most recent adjustable forward looking sonars has made a big difference for anglers. Side scans are sonar transmitters that operate much like a traditional bottom machine but have sonar transducers looking horizontally from each side of the boat taking constant images and presenting an image that looks directly under as well as considerable distances on each side of the boat. Not only does it make finding structure easier it help identify what the structure might be, such as artificial reef, wrecks, trees, etc. It will also image schools of fish and give indications of the school size and movement. In the image below the dark section denotes what is directly below the boat in the water column and the copper/brown is what's imaged on each side of the boat out to 60 feet. Fish can be seen on both side images near the bottom with the largest concentration beneath the boat on the right side. When looking at side scan images it's good to think about how the side scan works. It will make a sonar return on anything on the bottom or in the water column. The sonar can't past through an object so it will cast a sonar shadow on anything beyond the object. In the image on the right you can see some of the sonar shadows created by the fish. Once an angler understand the basics of side scan technology locating structure and schools of fish become easy.



Norfolk Anglers Club

www.norfolkanglersclub.com

Fishing Tips...

Custom Tides Guide Service will put anglers on fish with conventional tackle or fly fishing, whichever an angler prefers. Conventional tackle would be casting and spinning rod combinations. When fishing over oyster beds a favored artificial lure is the "Ned Rig" (photo right). It's a small 2-3" soft plastic lure with a button or mushroom head sinker/hook combination. Ned Rigs will sink down to the bottom and float tail up. Capt Yost advises when the red drum are concentrated on the bottom and don't seem to want to eat the Ned Rig is a great choice. He added that there's a number of Ned Rig lures on the market and that Z-Man has the heavier hooks, if that's your preference.



"The Ned Rig"

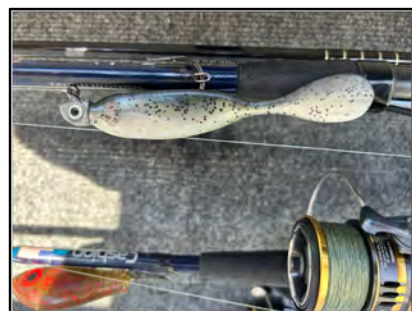


Another favored lure is the D.O.A.™ C.A.L. 5" Swim Bait (pictured left) . This is a very versatile Swim Bait with a wide profile body and vertical paddle tail. It can be rigged with D.O.A.™ screw lock style hook weighted or not (photo right) or on a jig head. Hook placement can be rigged in a weedless configuration where the hook is nearly exposed, which is an ideal setup around the grass beds or with the hook fully exposed fishing the surface of water column.



Photo courtesy of D.O.A.™

Capt Yost prefers this swim bait in mullet colors as shown and considers it a great option for fishing the Elizabeth River.



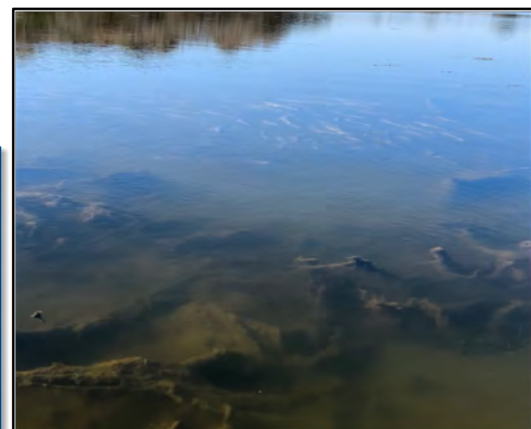
He recommends trying Savage Gear's line of crab baits for targeting red drum around the oyster beds and in grass flats. They are very realistic crab bait that's durable and comes in a variety of sizes from 1-3 inches. He prefers the natural peeler color and rigged to a stand-up jig (photo right).



Photo courtesy of Savage Gear®

While Capt Yost prefers using natural lure colors to closely match the bait in the area, he advises when the fish are present and not biting to switch colors until you have something the fish can't resist. Typically he'll start using natural colors in clearer water and shift to darker colors, like purple, in murky/dirtier waters. Your success goes up if you find a bunch of red drum schooled up in an area (photo lower right). When together like that red drum will get morre aggressive with feeding and you'll a few that will want to hit the lure before another gets it.

Another great suspending & sinking lure is PavLure's Big Softy (photo bottom center). Capt Yost replaces the treble hooks with single hooks on this soft bodied lure.



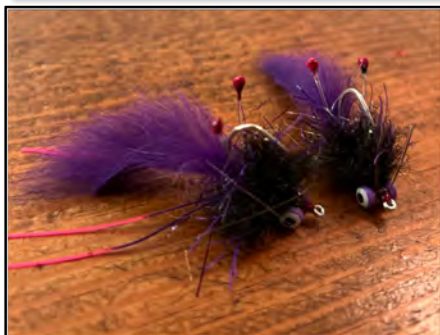
Custom Tides Guide Service
by Capt. Jason Yost

PavLures - Copano Bone





Custom Tides Guide Service also specializes in Fly Fishing charters for many species, including red drum. He'll switch up the fly line weight from 8 weight used in most fly fishing applications to 10 weight for large drum and 12 weight for powerful fighting fish like tarpon. Fly fishing line also comes in floating, sinking, and an intermediate line which will suspend to 8-10 feet. The leader setup differs from cast/spinning rods. Captain Yost will match his leader to the fly line and ties a number of lengths of differing leader toward the fly lure. His initial leader is 4ft of 40# leader, followed by 3ft of 30# leader, with a final length of about 2ft of 12-20# "Bite Tippit" leader. Blood knots are preferred to join leader lengths except for joining the last Bite Tippit length. It's tied on with an Albright knot and a loop knot for the fly lure. The loop knot gives the fly more natural action. The final or "Bite Tip It" leader weight varies depending on the water clarity and how skittish the fish are. With very clear water or facing a finicky bite he will drop down to a light as 12 Lbs leader.



Fly fishing lure combinations are endless but Capt Yost has a few recommendations for varying conditions. Generally he'll start working black/gold or black/purple fly colors in dirty water or cloudy conditions. On clear days and clear water he'll start with more natural colors. These are only a guide and if something isn't working he recommends changing up the color and size of the lure. He'll tie fly lures with differing weighted eyes and add a small amount of weight to the rear of the hook to keep the fly horizontal as it sinks. He also rigs them up "weedless" which adds a thin plastic weed guard that makes the lure less likely to snag on the grass.



He recommends after identifying where the fish are or where they're moving is to get your lure down in the strike zone. Then entice the strike with small twitches. When fishing with tied flies large movements aren't necessary. If using sinking fly line in a current he'll cast up current of the boat and let the line sink as it drifts by and not letting the line have too much slack.

He shared Buggs Fishing has a line of lures tied with fly material in many color combinations with a tied in rattle (photo lower left). These jig head lures come in differing weights and can be rigged with a soft rubber tail if desired.



Photo courtesy of Buggs Fishing



Captain Jason Yost
Owner/Operator

Custom Tides Guide Service
757-650-2291

Customtidesguideservice@yahoo.com



Fishing Reports

March 5: Winter appears to have broken so, Mary & I headed to the Nottoway River to see if the Shad Run had started. We launched at the Hercules Ramp in Courtland, VA. The river was at about a medium height. We ran up stream a couple miles to the 2nd fork where we have had good luck in previous years.



The bite was on. We fished for 2.5 hours and caught over 20 Shad, all released. We used a "000" size shad spoon with a shad dart on a 5" dropper loop about 15" above the spoon. Spoon color didn't matter: silver, gold, green/white. The shad darts were green/yellow.

- Henry Troutner



March 23: Got a call from Capitán Alex the day before and asking if I would be available to fish Rudee on Monday. He tells me it's his Mother's Birthday and there's no better way to celebrate than go fishing! He even came equipped with his new Florida Fishing Hat because his Mom is in Pompano Beach, Fla.

We set out at 8:00am and fished until 1:00pm. Fishing was very slow with the water temperature varying between 55.3° - 56.0°. We fished jig heads with gulp tails along the shoreline oyster beds and marsh. I caught two empty oyster shells, Alex caught a blue crab, and then I brought in a complete oyster. I had an opportunity to see his Garmin Live Scope in action and it certainly is nice! We could see a few fish moving together believing they were puppy drum and a few schools of bait moving around. Then Alex lets me know he sees some larger fish moving in slowly from the right and I made a cast to head them off. "They've turned toward your lure!" My heart sank when I felt the jig head snag on another oyster. Then the "oyster" pulled back slightly before taking off! My "oyster" turned out to be a nice just over slot red drum which was tagged and released. While it

was the only fish landed, it was great to be on the water and celebrating his Mom's Birthday!

- Will Bransom



March 9 & 10: Spring has arrived and the Shad have started to run in the Nottoway River. On Monday, John Curry, Mary & I fished, then Mary & I returned on Tuesday. Both days were beautiful on this scenic waterway. We had a slow but steady bite on Monday but it picked up Tuesday. Among the Shad, Mary also caught a Pickerel and a Small Mouth Bass. We now have our supply of Crab bait for the year. Our usual small spoon below a 1/4 ounce Shad Dart was our set up, color doesn't seem to matter.

- Henry Troutner



March 25: James Tran, Mary & I took the skiff to the Nottoway River to check out how this crazy weather has affected the Shad run. It was a beautiful day on this scenic waterway, chilly in the morning but sunny and warming up as the day progressed. The bite was slow but steady with James, on his first Shad trip, landing the first fish. We fished about 3 hours and landed over 20 fish. James kept a few for the roe and bait, the rest were released. A small Shad spoon with a Shad dart about 16" up the line was our rig and color didn't seem to matter.

- Henry Troutner





Norfolk
Anglers
Club