

Priceless

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COASTAL FISHERMAN

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May 8, 2024



Anthony Emerick from Hackettstown, NJ has been a toggging machine this year! He holds First Fish honors for the blackfish he caught on January 8th on the "Fish Bound" using white crab legs and has spent the spring catching at least 5 more, including this 14 pounder caught aboard the "Chasing Tides", also using white crab.



Joe Payne of Ocean Pines took the sands of Assateague with Mike Shaulis of Ocean City to tap into the bluefish run. Joe beached this 36" and 10.2 lb. chopper on finger mullet. It also set a new Heaviest Fish for the season so far!

A promotional graphic for the Bluefish Tournament. On the left is a circular logo with a scalloped edge. Inside the logo is a bluefish and the text 'BLUES FOR D.U.', '2024', 'BLUEFISH TOURNAMENT', 'BENEFITING DUCKS UNLIMITED', and 'BAHIA MARINA • OCEAN CITY, MD'. Below the logo is a photo of a man holding a bluefish. To the right, the text '3rd Annual' is written vertically. The main title 'BLUEFISH TOURNAMENT' is in large, bold, orange letters. Below that, 'June 7-9 2024' is written in large white letters. To the right of the dates is a blue fish logo with 'BAHIA MARINA OCEAN CITY, MD' and a Facebook icon. At the bottom, there is a banner with the text 'Every Angler in the Blues for D.U. will get a FREE D.U. Membership!' and 'JUNE 6 at Bahia Marina: Final Entry Sign Up 4pm / Captain's Meeting 7pm'. Below that, entry fees are listed: 'ANGLERS 1-4: \$200 ... ANGLERS 5-6: \$50 per Angler' and 'ADDED ENTRY LEVELS: BLUEFISH \$50 • \$100 • \$150 BONUS \$200 WTA'. At the very bottom, it says 'for more information contact us at BAHIA MARINA 410.289.7438'.



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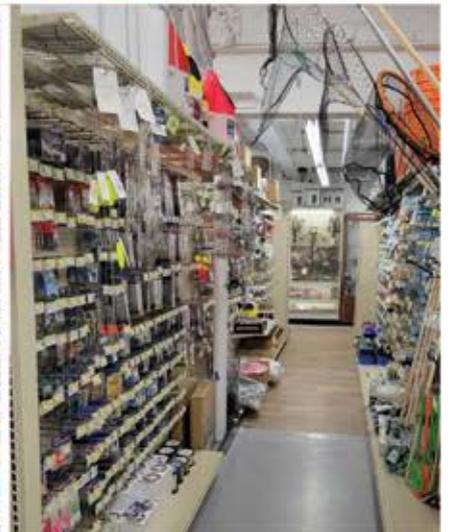
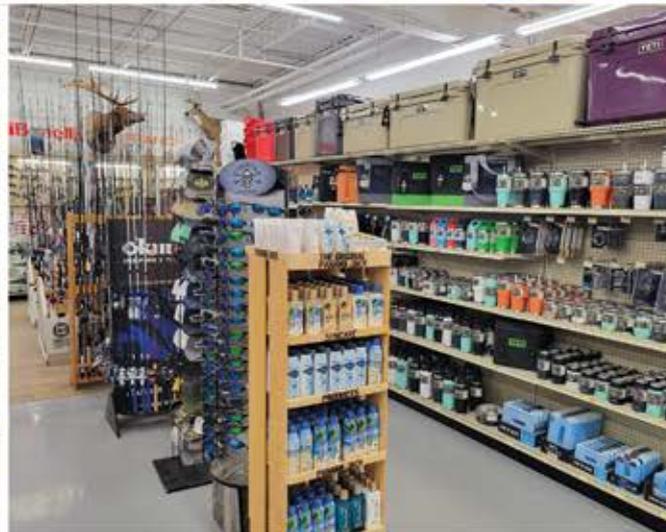


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Tom Berry from Kensington, MD took advantage of one of the warmer days last week to get on the beach at 120th St. in Ocean City. He reeled in this 29" and 13 lb. black drum using sand fleas.



Why wouldn't you smile when sharing four early season keeper flounder? Capt. Willy Poole on the charter boat "Local Hooker" put this crew on some nice flatfish from the Thorofare using white Gulp on jig heads. They also had 2 throwbacks.

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THE Offshore Report

by Larry Budd

This Week Last Year

- The offshore action got an early start with several First Fish being reported. The "Full Service" ran 60 miles to the Baltimore Canyon and hooked up with a 95 lb. bigeye. The "Talkin' Trash" headed out for some tile fishing and found a nice weed line in the Poor Man's Canyon. They spotted a couple mahi and were able to catch one for the first of 2023. The "Pier Pressure" ran to the Poor Man's Canyon and landed a 113.2 lb. bigeye and a yellowfin tuna.
- The "Hocus Pocus" ventured to the Poor Man's Canyon finding 64° water. They trolled spreader bars in 100 fathoms and got 5 yellowfins in the box. They too found a weedline with a 5° temperature break and managed a nice mahi.

Welcome faithful readers to our second edition of the Coastal Fisherman for 2024. I would have expected by now that we would be sharing some offshore news for some tuna at least. As you can read in our 'This Week Last Year' column to the left, by this time in 2023 we had 3 species of tuna on the board as well as a mahi. While a bigeye in May is unusual, yellowfin and bluefin are far more common. May can be a fickle month for the canyons. While last year saw early action, several will recall that in 2022 we were experiencing what became known as the Mother's Day Nor'easter that parked offshore for 4 days wreaking havoc on the beaches and driving any warmer weather south.

While this year we have not seen a single strong storm, we have had our fair share of smaller ones and incessant

winds. This has not only kept the canyons cool and any eddies from the Gulf Stream at bay, it has also hampered many captains preparations.

I reached out to several captains known for heading out early in the season to check in on their plans. Several reported that instead of watching the water for a window of opportunity, their boats were still on the hard with several projects still to be completed. Compliments of Mother Nature I suppose. Capt. Jim Barbey on the "Full Service" reported considering a run north to try to get into some of the bluefin bite that NJ has seen. Their's was so hot that there were almost 2 dozen trophy size (>73") reported at the docks last weekend. Enough were reported that fisheries closed the sub quota

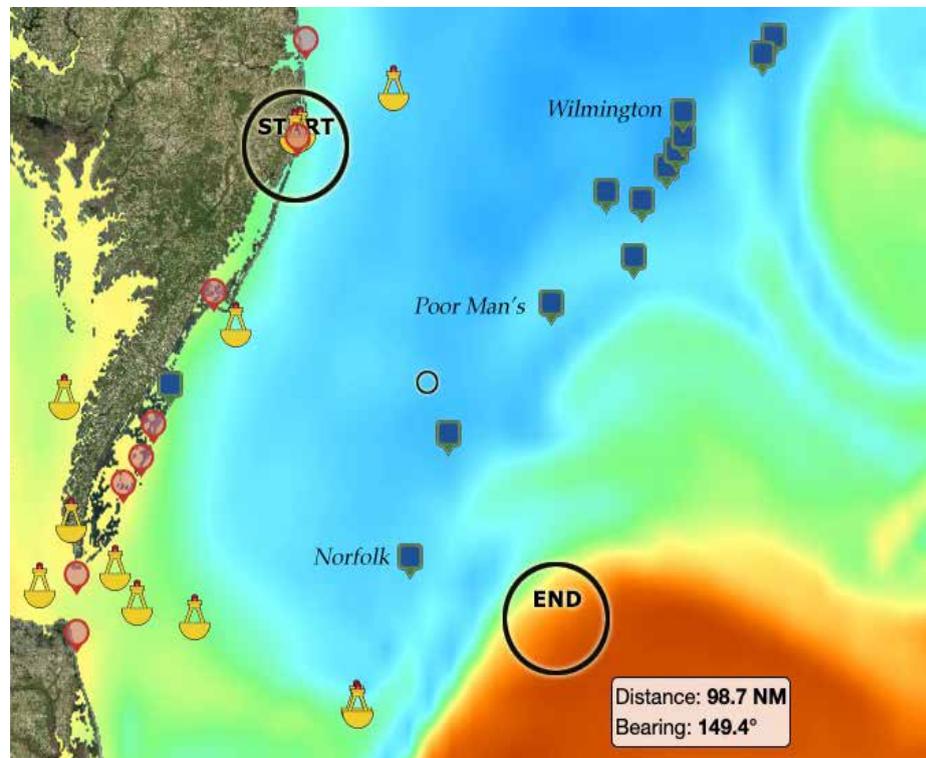
for trophy's as of May 2nd!

Some anxious anglers have made some runs over the past several weeks. Heading out from Ocean City as well as Chincoteague, they found slightly warmer waters to the east of the southern canyons. Some reported good baitfish activity, but none reported bites.



As you can see from the water temperature chart below, the canyons remain cool in the high 40's (blue) to low 50's (green). This chart is a forecast for the 10th and you will see the warmer red temps reaching the eastern waters outside the Norfolk, about a 100 mile run from Ocean City. I wish I could report that the 10 day forecast looks promising, but that would definitely be a fish story!

So for now we will need to be patient and keep a weather eye on the horizon knowing the fish will be coming! §



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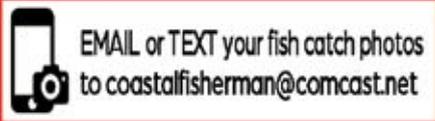
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OC POWDER COATINGS

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EMAIL or TEXT your fish catch photos to coastalfisherman@comcast.net

Upcoming Tournaments

- The **Lewes Harbour Marina** will hold it's **Canal Flounder Tournament** on May 17th starting at 7 AM. For more info check Facebook or call (302) 645-6227.
- **Old Inlet Bait & Tackle** hosts their **Cast for a Cure Team Surf Fishing Tournament** on May 18th. More info on Facebook or call 302-227-7974.
- The **Battle for the Buckle** offshore tournament returns for it's second season from May 31st-June 2nd in association with the PBR Challenger Series Rodeo Event. More at pbroceancity.com.



Well, if you are going to catch your first black drum you might as well go big! That is what Dantzler Lambert did last week at the Coral Beds in the Delaware Bay. She was fishing with her fiancé Devin Medd with Colleen Bailey and Capt. JT DiGuglielmo. This one hit on surf clams and was released.

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Our man Big Bird Cropper was back out on the "Lost Time" doing what he does best, bluefishing. This trip was down to the Verrazano Bridge using his Roy Rig lure.



It was all kinds of fish for Shaun Flaherty last week. He took several trips on his kayak over to the rock of Assateague Island. This trip saw two good sized flounder. He also snared a 33" chopper blue and a striper, all using a Roy Rig.

2024 MARYLAND • DELAWARE • VIRGINIA CITATION ATLANTIC COAST SIZES

	<u>MD</u>	<u>DE</u> **	<u>VA</u>		<u>MD</u>	<u>DE</u> **	<u>VA</u>
Atlantic Spadefish	24"	-	-	Wahoo	60"	20 lbs. or 50"	35 lbs.
Black Drum	48"	50 lbs. or 45"	80 lbs. or 46"	Weakfish	24"	3 lbs. or 20"	30"
Black Sea Bass	20"	3 lbs. or 17"	5 lbs.	White Marlin*	Any Size	Any Size	Any Size
Bluefish	34"	12 lbs. or 29"	16 lbs. or 36"	SHARK:			
Blue Marlin*	Any Size	Any Size	Any Size	Blue Shark*	Any Size	100 lbs. or 66"	72"
Cobia	44"	45 lbs. or 48"	55 lbs. or 50"	Hammerhead*	Any Size	100 lbs. or 66"	72"
Croaker	18"	3 lbs. or 19"	3 lbs. or 20"	Thresher*	80"	100 lbs. or 66"	72"
Dolphin	45"	15 lbs. or 41"	25 lbs.	Tiger*	Any Size	100 lbs. or 66"	72"
Flounder	24"	7 lbs. or 25"	6 lbs. or 26"	Swordfish	47"	Any Size	100 lbs.
Golden Tilefish	35"	35 lbs. or 40"	30 lbs.	TUNA:			
Kingfish (Northern Whiting)	14"	1 lb. or 13"	1.5 lb. or 16"	Longfin Albacore	36"	30 lb. or 32"	40 lbs.
King Mackerel	40"	10 lbs. or 26"	20 lbs.	False Albacore	24"	12 lbs. or 26"	32"
Red Drum*	36"	45"	-	Bigeye***	60"	70 lbs. or 48"	70 lbs.
Sailfish*	Any Size	-	-	Bluefin***	55"	100 lbs. or 60"	100 lbs. or 60"
Sheepshead	20"	8 lbs. or 22"	10 lbs. or 24"	Yellowfin***	50"	70 lbs. or 48"	70 lbs.
Spanish Mackerel	22"	5 lbs. or 22"	4 lbs. or 26"				
Speckled Trout	24"	-	5 lbs. or 24"				
Striped Bass	40"	44"	44"				
Tautog	24"	7 lbs. or 25"	9 lbs. or 23"				

* Only released fish are eligible in Maryland program
 ** DE - Lengths only apply to Live Release
 *** Use curved-fork-length measurements



Bluefish and drum have been dominating the action in the surf lately, but we are getting reports of a lot of nice striper bites. Colin Reeves of Frankford, DE landed and released this 37" rock after only fishing for 30 minutes (only one for the day). He was using artificial bloodworms for bait from the 3R's drive on beach and apparently had the place to himself!



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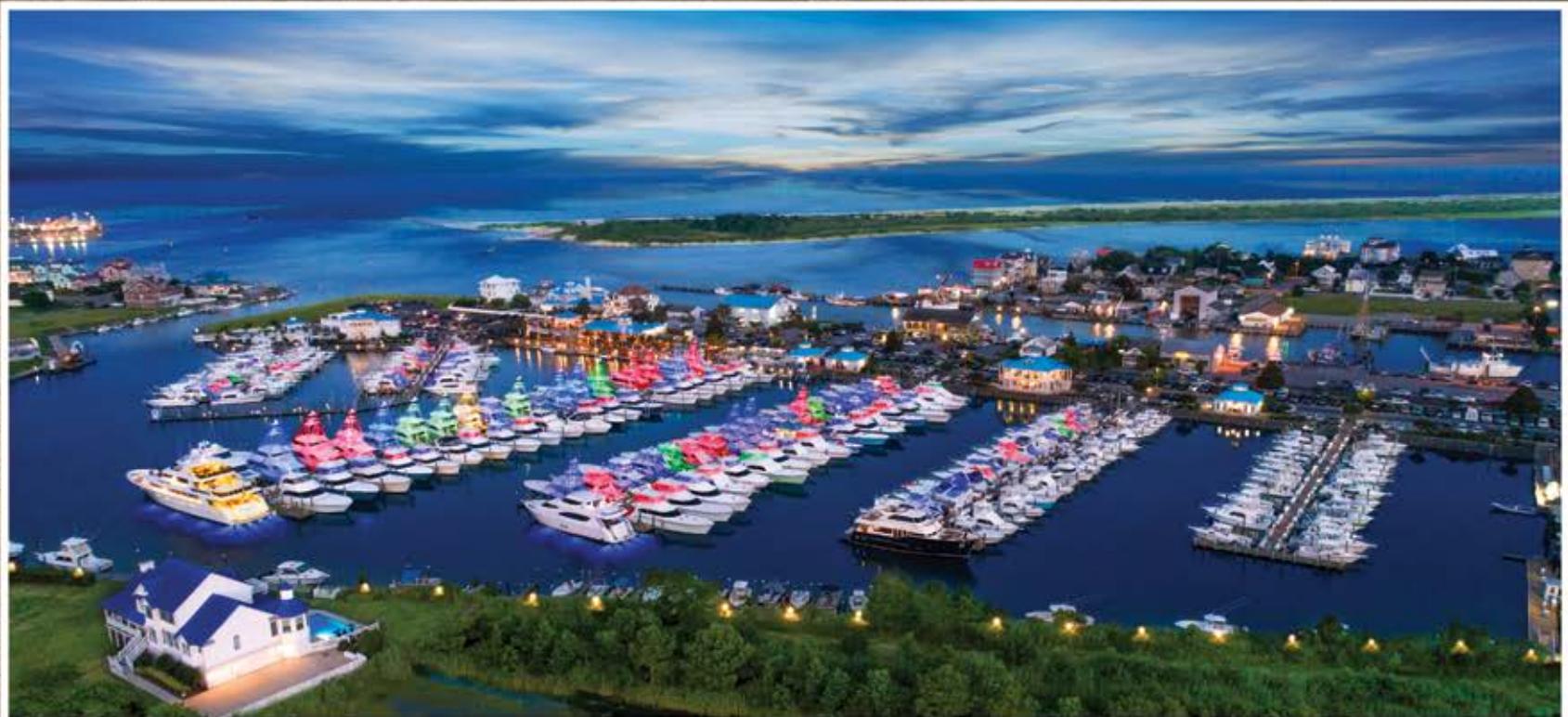
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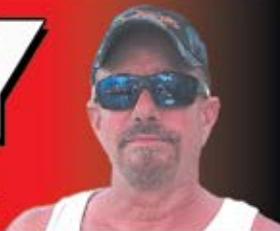
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OCEAN CITY

FISHING REPORT

by Capt. BJ Pietryak



Last week in Maryland we enjoyed our warmest temperatures of the season so far. With the thermometer rising into the mid 80's, we had a big warm up in the back bays. Inshore tog fishing is still running strong. Large double digit fish are being caught off the near shore wrecks as well as off the jetties of Ocean City. In the back bays, the flounder fishing is beginning to start up with keepers being caught more regularly. There are still a lot of smaller fish but keepers can be found in the deeper main channels of Ocean City like the Thorofare. The surf is still holding larger bluefish as well as the migrating black drum. The waters and beaches are still pretty deserted and offer ample room for both boats

as well as surf fisherman. Assateague Island drive on beach (over sand vehicle) permit areas are reaching maximum capacity by 9 am on the weekends, however the weekdays remain available on most days.

Back Bays and Inlet

The inlet and bridges have small rockfish and some of the biggest bluefish we have seen for years. "Big Bird" Cropper was out this past week with his neighbor Dave and pulled in a few nice striped bass off the bridge pilings. He managed a nice 33" rock but it was full of red sores all along its body. If you encounter one of these sick fish try not to handle it as many people can get a bad infection from them. "Big Bird" did find some

big chomper blues up by the Verrazano Bridge. Bluefish have been all along the bridge areas as well as the rock jetties of the inlet. Bucktails and swim baits are the main lure for catching these hard fishing fish. Cut bait was a close second bait when fished on a circle hook. Jacob Raber fished the surf just outside the inlet and wacked several big bluefish on mullet rigs. Jacob stated that the fish were close to shore right in front of the sand bars so no need to cast far out. The fish hit during a low tide and the incoming tide. Ivanna Harshman was in the back bays of OC and hauled in a beauty of a blue measuring 33 inches. "Lucky Break Charters" said that the flounder fishing is starting to pick up in the back bays with some bluefish and tog thrown in the mix. Capt. Jason Mumford is hoping for less wind and warmer days to really get the bite fired up. They reported they still have lots of dates available so call soon before the dates are taken. Vince Cannuli got 3 tog off the jetty walls on Monday using shrimp and clam.

Nearshore Wrecks and Reefs

Nearshore wrecks are still producing some nice tog along with some big bluefish and the occasional sea bass. "Team Reel Strong" was out toging again this past week and caught several keeper tog on isolated wrecks and reef zones. Cut green crabs caught the tog. Brad Stall said they tried using shrimp but got tore up by the sea bass. Several nice size bass were hooked leading them to believe when the season opens in two weeks we should have a great start. The fish have really started to congregate on the near shore wrecks in the past couple of weeks, and although no

big clouds of schools, they did hook some nice big knoheads. All sea bass were safely released to be caught again when the season opens on the 15 of May. Captain DJ Churchill of "Double Trouble Charters" got a few more days in this past week catching tog up to 16 pounds. He stated it's always a battle with the weather when fishing for tog but his catches were pretty consistent.

Surf Fishing

Brian Reynolds was out on the beach, and although did not catch the black drum he was looking, for he did manage to pull in a few big slammer bluefish. Tanner Wazzog was out with wind blown hair and leaky waders, but managed to pull in a beautiful black drum. The fish was caught on a fish finder rig tipped with fresh clam. Tanner also brought in a few slammer blues on his morning out. Rich Warfield, David Moore, and the Mango were fishing the beach and pulled in several blues up to 34 inches. David Moore was also on the island beach and caught 4 blues including some nice slammer ones that tested his light line and drag. Seth Price fished hard on Thursday but the high winds made casting difficult and he only managed one big blue. PJ Robert got three blues on the outgoing tide Friday on cut mullet. The fish were close to shore in the first trough. Nathan Seaman had an incredible day on Assateague beach fishing between 2 hours before and after low tide using high low rigs with Fishbites and 2 sand fleas, as well as bluefish rigs with cut bunker. Nathan caught a couple nice sized for eating black drum as well as some nice size bluefish on the mullet rigs. Tristan Archer was on the beach and pulled in a nice 36 inch rockfish. The fish was caught in a cut bunker. Joseph Payne got a nice 36 inch blue off the beach in Ocean City. Brad,

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Aiden, and Declan got into the gator blues on Assateague on Monday. Cut bait and mullet rigs accounted for the hookups. The fish were checked into Old Inlet Bait and Tackle. Nicholas Fornaro reported there was a crazy chopper bluefish bite on Wednesday with big fish heading north. Rockfish and flounder should be close behind. Steve Lewis got his first black drum of the season on Wednesday off Assateague Beach using fresh crab and clam. This year both clam and crab seem to be the best ticket for catching one of these big ugly fish. Fishbites and sand fleas also seem to be working pretty well.

No real reports on crabbing or clamming in the Assawoman Bay as of yet but as water warms the crabs and clams should start getting better in numbers.

Till next week...

Tight lines and fins up §



Erin and Ryan Cowder had a great day working the bay behind Assateague Island. Erin fooled this 20" flounder using a Deadly Double Rig with white Gulp. Nice size for early in the season!



UPCOMING TOURNAMENT!

45th ANNUAL SMALL BOAT TOURNAMENT
 Registration: June 21, 6:30-8:00pm
 Fishing Days: (1 of 2) June 22 & 23
 Weigh-Ins: June 22 & 23, 3:00-6:30pm at Sunset Marina

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— 2024 SCHEDULE —



* You do NOT have to be a Member to Participate in this Tournament

<p>42nd ANNUAL CANYON KICK OFF * Registration: July 3, 6:30-8:00pm FREE TO PAID OCMC BOAT MEMBERS Fishing Days: (2 of 3) July 5, 6 & 7 Weigh-Ins: July 5, 6 & 7 5:00-7:30pm at Sunset Marina</p>	<p> 20th ANNUAL KID'S CLASSIC * <i>To benefit the Wish-A-Fish Foundation</i> Registration: July 19, 6:00-8:00pm Fishing Days: (1 or 2 of 2) July 20 & 21 Weigh-Ins: July 20, 3:00-6:30pm and July 21, 3:00-6:00pm at Sunset Marina</p>	<p>16th ANNUAL FRANKY PETTOLINA "HEELS & REELS" TOURNAMENT * <i>To benefit the Marlin Club Crew of OC Scholarship Fund</i> Registration: August 1, 6:00-8:00pm Fishing Days: (1 of 2) August 2 & 3 Weigh-Ins: August 2 & 3 5:30-7:30pm at Atlantic Tackle</p>
<p>44th ANNUAL CHARLES KRATZ & SCOTT SMITH CHALLENGE CUP Registration: Sept. 11, 6:00-8:00pm Fishing Days: (2 of 3) Sept. 12, 13 & 14 Weigh-Ins: NO WEIGH-INS This is strictly a release tournament. Catch reports will be turned in to the Marlin Club Office nightly Sept. 12, 13 & 14, 6:00pm - 8:00pm</p>	<p>66th ANNUAL LABOR DAY WHITE MARLIN TOURNAMENT * TBD</p>	<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Check for Updates on our WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA</p> </div>

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While we wait for the canyons to warm, Berlin, MD native George Zacepilo headed south to Playa Del Carmen in Mexico. He fished on the "Pelicano" and caught this 85" and 77 lb. sailfish as well as a mahi. While they were trolling ballyhoo, both were caught on plastics. He is having this one mounted for his house!



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LONGNECK, DE



Joe and Jack Eberhard had an epic week of fishing last week on Assateague. Over 4 days they caught and released 23 stripers, 6 black drum and a red, and dealt with double and triple hookups! Even Henry the dog could not contain his excitement.

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

MAY

Old Inlet Annual Spring Surf Fishing Tournament

May 4 • Old Inlet Bait & Tackle • 302-227-7974

Lewes Harbour Marina Canal Flounder Tournament

May 17 • Lewes Harbour Marina • 302-645-6227

Cast for a Cure Team Surf Fishing Tournament

May 18 • Old Inlet Bait & Tackle • 302-227-7974

Battle for the Buckle's

May 31 - June 2 • www.pbroccancity.com

JUNE

3rd Annual Blues for D.U.

June 7-9 • Bahia Marina • 410-289-7438

OC Smackdown Tuna Tournament

June 7-8 • Atlantic Tackle • 410-289-7438

3rd Annual Tuna & Tiaras Ladies Tuna Tournament

June 14-15 • Ocean City, MD • 410-212-7159

School's Out Tuna Tournament

June 19 - 23 • Cape May, NJ • 609-884-2400

9th Annual Indian River Kids Catch-All Tournament

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45th Annual OCMC Small Boat Tournament

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2 HOUR SUNSET DOLPHIN CRUISE from 7:00 - 9:00PM

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for more info, visit us at fishlewes.com



Another First Fish as well as a Heaviest to Date was set by Jim Hittches for weakfish. He caught this 4.6 lb beauty in the Delaware Bay on May 2nd. Measured and pictured at Lewes Harbour Marina.



It was big meaty drums for Devon Schere and Aiden Dawson. They caught this blackies in the Delaware Bay in the wevening with the largest at 34 lbs. setting a new Heaviest Fish for DE for black drum. Pictured at Rick's Bait & Tackle.

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FIRST 2024

Fish of the Year

(AS REPORTED TO THE COASTAL FISHERMAN - MUST BE OF LEGAL LIMIT AND REPORTED WITH PHOTO)

Species	2024	2023	Species	2024	2023
 Bluefish	April 19 Aiden Sparano Assateague	April 19 Dave Moore Assateague Island	 Weakfish	 May 2 Jim Hittches Delaware Bay	
 Black Drum	March 31 Chris Taylor Assateague	April 3 Jeremy Zinn 145th Street, OC	 Bigeye Tuna		May 5 Jeff Rosenkilde "Full Service" Baltimore Canyon
 Cobia		July 4 Gabriella Kendus Faithful Steward	 Bluefin Tuna		May 29 The Crew "Marli" Baltimore Canyon
 Summer Flounder	April 8 Paul Musser Jr. Thorofare	March 27 Dakota Bittner Thorofare	 Longfin Tuna		
 Sea Bass		May 15 Mike DePalma Sr. Great Eastern Reef	 Yellowfin Tuna		May 6 Chris Kroh "Kilroy" Poorman's Canyon
 Sheepshead		May 5 Anthony Carrieri Ocean City Jetty	 Dolphin		May 6 Brad Hubbard "Talkin' Trash" Poorman's Canyon
 Striped Bass	January 3 Brian Reynolds Rt. 90 Bridge	April 15 Shaun Flaherty Rt. 50 Bridge	 Swordfish		June 16 Crew "Wrecker" Poorman's Canyon
 Tautog	 January 8 Anthony Emerick Ocean Structure	January 31 Josh Schwemiein Ocean Structure	 Blue Marlin		June 1 Steve Sylvester "Talkin' Trash" Norfolk Canyon
 Wahoo		June 9 Josh Short Poorman's Canyon	 White Marlin		June 2 Joe Huk "RESTLESS LADY II" Baltimore Canyon

To report your catch, call the Coastal Fisherman at 410-213-2200 or email to coastalfisherman@comcast.net



Marcelo Gustavo Zangille may depend on the kindness of strangers! While he normally fishes alone, this trip to Assateague saw some nice guys passing by as he reeled in this black drum allowing for a rare photo opportunity. While he wanted to use bunker for bait, none was to be found so he raked up some sand fleas to trick this one. It was his only fish of the day and was released to fight another day.

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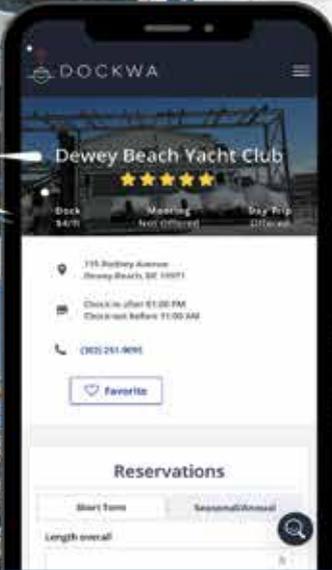
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FISHING CHARTERS



Capt. Rich Harpel was working the coral beds off Broadkill Beach for drum when he reeled up a nice surprise, a smooth dogfish. He was hooked on a hi-lo rig with a 4 oz. sinker.



Capt. Al on the "Kingpin" wanted to make sure this tog was good and secure on a heavy hook to be weighed at Old Inlet Bait & Tackle. He fished Site 11 at the end of April and landed this 8.25 lb. blackfish.

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FISHING CHARTERS



The action continued to be hot for bluefish in the Delaware Bay. Angler Alex Gerber caught this chopper from the Cape Henlopen Fishing Pier with bait from Lewes Ice house Bait & Tackle.



These kids were troopers on their trip with Capt. Dave Caffrey of "On the Run Charters". Despite the chilly weather, Katie, James and Robert Miller from Owens, MD caught some nice tog at the Ocean City Jetty using crab. Pictured at Bahia Marina.

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FISHING CHARTERS



A rare find on Assateague Island last week. Beach goers found this 6' skeleton of an Atlantic Sturgeon. Many consider this fish a living fossil as it can be traced back 85 million years. It's has a prehistoric appearance due to the hard plates along its spine called 'Scutes' that can be seen here from the head to the tail. They can live up to 60 years, are considered highly endangered and threatened as a species.

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FISHING CHARTERS



There were blues for days for this crew after fishing with Capt. Jason Mumford on the charter boat "Lucky Break". Tommy Barbetta and Brian Curvin of Morrisville, PA with George Waldron from Bristol, PA and Matt Toth of Ewing, NJ worked the bay behind Assateague with cut bait for these 5 gators.



Fenwick Island police officer Steve Majewski spent one of his days off on the beach. He landed this just about 28" striper using cut mullet. Just a bit too short to keep, it was released.

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FISHING CHARTERS



Capt. Kane Bounds reported he had several successful trips last week before the weekend winds blew. Some days like the one above saw a fish for everyone, other days anglers had to work a little harder. He is preparing to shift gears as tog season winds down and everyone preps for sea bass opening day on the 15th!

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DAILY!
7:30 pm to 9:00 pm thru end of July
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It certainly looks like Mike Blake, Ronald Phillips and Tayio Strong had fun fishing with Capt. Dave Caffrey of "On the Run Charters"! They fished around the Ocean City Jetty using crabs and caught 4 nice blackfish.

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The weekend did not provide friendly fishing weather, but that did not seem to stop young angler Aiden Sparano. He was out again in the cold on Fenwick Island's beach Saturday and shared this pic with Fenwick Bait & Tackle as the eastern blow brought the big blues back in.

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Shaun Flaherty's beard is in full regalia this time of year as he only cuts it around Mother's Day! It did not seem to get in the way of his fishing however. This trip by kayak to the rocks of Assateague yielded this 33" gator blue on a Roy Rig.



Angler Kyle Siler finished up April with a bang landing these 2 keeper flounder from the Lewes Canal on a morning trip.

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www.coastalfisherman.net feature on the ActiveCaptain app to access and wirelessly update your charts from your mobile device and download premium content, such as relief shading, directly to your chartplotter.

There is an APP for that
Once a gimmick for tech savvy boaters, smartphone/smart device Applications or Apps for marine use have become a necessity for most boaters.

The Navionics apps was one of the original navigational tools that included detailed marine charts and a chartplotter available on a phone or tablet. About 5 years ago, Captain Big Al was delivering a new used boat from Florida to Maryland and proclaimed that he used the Navionics app on his iPhone to navigate since it was better than the outdated chartplotters on the helm that were missing the charts he needed.

The Navionics company has since been acquired by Garmin and a handful of other well established navigation apps and tools have joined Navionics to provide tools and resources for every type of boater.

Though there are many boaters and Captains that would like to leave the smartphone stowed and concentrate on the use of the latest technology built into the marine electronics on the helm, especially when the

helm screens of today are much larger than in the past and can perform many functions, not just to navigate but also run the ships' systems.

Unfortunately for those who are reluctant to incorporate the smartphone into the helm operations, it may soon be required to use a smartphone/tablet in some fashion to



keep up to date on the helm electronics.

Garmin, with their ActiveCaptain® App has become a necessity for many Captains and boaters. The ActiveCaptain® App is Garmin's recommended method of updating software and purchasing/updating charts. The free ActiveCaptain app creates a powerful connection between your

compatible smart device and Garmin chartplotter, charts, maps, and the boating community. Use it to activate your Garmin Navionics+™ or Garmin Navionics Vision+™ subscription, plus download daily updates and premium content. Here are a few features:

Purchase charts and activate your Garmin Navionics+™ or Garmin Navionics Vision+™ subscription from your mobile device at any time with the built-in OneChart feature, then seamlessly upload the charts to your chartplotter through the app.

Use the built-in OneChart

Access your charts from anywhere – whether you are on the water or at home – using the OneChart™ feature.

Create personal HD bathymetry maps in real time. Share your Quickdraw Contours map data

in the Garmin Quickdraw™ Community system, download the latest community map, and transfer it to your chartplotter. Your depth data can also improve the fishing chart detail on Garmin marine mapping products, which can be downloaded via the ActiveCaptain app with your active marine chart

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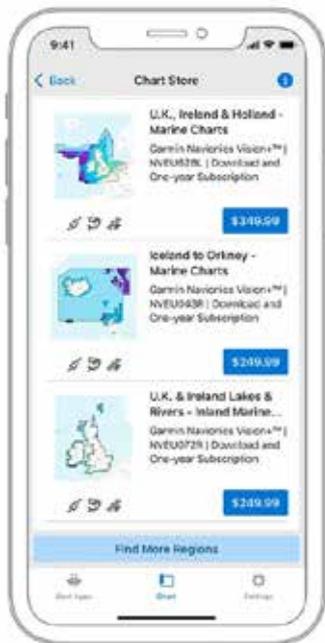
Receive notifications about the most recent software updates directly from the app and update your chartplotter wirelessly.

The ActiveCaptain community of other boaters gets you the inside scoop on marinas and more from fellow boaters.

Plan your trips and mark waypoints on your smartphone, then automatically see them on your chartplotter.

Get peace of mind in the form of text alerts and updates with the combination of the OnDeck™ system and the ActiveCaptain app.

To use the ActiveCaptain app with your modern chartplotters: First step: to use ActiveCaptain, you will need to install the app to a smart device, like a smartphone or tablet. The app can be downloaded through the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store. To check if the chartplotter/



fishfinder is compatible, and what connected features ActiveCaptain can offer, see ActiveCaptain App Compatibility on the Garmin website.

Second step: Once the ActiveCaptain app is installed on the smart device, register the device with ActiveCaptain and connect the compatible chartplotter/fishfinder. To view instructions for registering the chartplotter/ fishfinder see

Registering Garmin Marine Devices and Charts on the Garmin website.

NOTE: if the chartplotter(s) have been registered and connected to someone else's active captain account in the past, you will need to contact Garmin to remove the previous user and perform a factory reset of the onboard hardware. Once this step is completed a new ActiveCaptain user can be added to the onboard electronics. Only one ActiveCaptain "owner" is allowed to manipulate the chartplotters.

Once you get the active captain connected and updated, then the rest is up to you on what you would like to do. You can purchase charts, update existing charts, and update system software all from within the app, along with many other features. You can also back up your waypoints to the "cloud".

Why is this so important lately? Many boaters are now

May 8, 2024 Coastal Fisherman Page 31
seeing Garmin messages on their chartplotter about chart subscriptions, indicating that the existing charts subscription is "status inactive". This does not necessarily mean that the charts will not work, it is a warning message to let you know there is no active subscription for updates and additional features. Currently, the chart will continue to display its current data, but the latest updates will not be available.

Thankfully, for those who do not want to mess around with the smartphone and ActiveCaptain, Garmin now offers pre-programmed Navionics Vision+ charts that you can install directly into your chartplotter and have upgraded charts without needing to use ActiveCaptain!

There are many convenient features of the Garmin ActiveCaptain App, worth a look for many captains and boaters. §

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Rebecca, Adam and Rick Hildebrant with Clara Kelley, Maggie Lingo, John Hollingsworth and Jane Keller had an outstanding outing on the charter boat "Katydid", filling the cleaning table at Lewes Harbor Marina.



Brian Weibly and Rich Morder from Pennsylvania did well in the Thorofare last Friday. They caught these three keeper flounder using Gulp.

2024 MARYLAND REGULATIONS

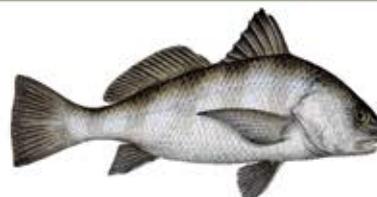
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October 10 - December 31



BLUEFISH
8" minimum
3 per person/day or
5 per person/day Charter



BLACK DRUM
16" minimum
1 per person/day up to 6 per boat/day



COBIA
40" minimum
1 per person/day 6/15 - 9/15
Boat limit 2 for up to 2 anglers



CROAKER
9" minimum
25 per person/day



RED DRUM
18-27" minimum
1 per person/day



SHEEPSHEAD
4 per person/day



SPECKLED TROUT
14" minimum
4 per person/day



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28-31"
Less than 3 miles from shore
1 per person/day



SUMMER FLOUNDER
16" minimum
4 per person/day
1/1 - 5/31 - 16"
6/1 - 12/31 - 17.5"



TAUTOG
16" minimum
4 per person/day 1/1 - 5/15
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4 per person/day 11/1 - 12/31



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DELAWARE FISHING REPORT

by Capt. BJ Pietryak



Warmer weather and calmer winds have been the story for last week in Delaware. The surface temps in the back bays have risen considerably and more fish are showing up. The ocean waters continue to produce big tog and bluefish off the wrecks and beaches.

Schools of black sea bass are moving into the area and should be here in time for the season opening on May 15.

The Delaware Bay is beginning to see some big breeder black drum moving in. Over the next few weeks the big fish up to 100 pounds will move into the lower part of the DE bay to spawn. For many anglers this is a prime time to be able to hook a true monster of a fish in relatively shallow water. Chumming with crushed clams and soaking big surf clams on big 6/0 to 8/0 hooks on the bottom just off the shoals is sure to get one of these big uglies attention.

Back Bays & Inlets

The back bay areas have started to warm up and the fishing has improved. In

general the bay fishing is still slow for this time of the year. The Lewes Canal has really started to turn on with small rockfish, blues and some big flounder being caught.

At the Indian River Inlet, blues are being caught mostly at night, with a few undersized rocks thrown in for good measure. Mostly undersized flounder are being pulled from the inlet and back bays, but last week's warm temperatures in the 80s should begin to improve this week.

Andrew Esham was out for his first trip of the year and returned to the dock with 4 keeper flounder. The fish were all over 18 inches, well above the 16" limit right now.

As a reminder, the minimum flounder size limit will change to 17.5" on June 1.

Andrew Wayson was using a floating jig head at Indian River and managed a few keeper fluke. He stated most of the fish swallowed the jigs all the way down. Tom Scibek thanked Captain Eddie Matthews for putting him on

the fish and showing him a new spot in the bay. The crew invited several flounder to join them for dinner. Lewes Icehouse had a big flounder checked in from Broadkill Beach. Several reports of fish in the river as well as the Lewes Canal have been reported.

Taron Redding caught a speckled trout at the inlet. Great to see these fish here nice and early this season. The Lewes Canal is giving up some nice fish of late. Wiker Restoration Group was out and caught 7 flatties and 2 stripers. These guys always seem to find the fish and make our report. Jack Wright checked into Lewes Harbour Marina with a monster 24.4 inch flounder caught on minnows. Great job Rich! Destiny Hastings from Frankford fished with her dad in the Lewes Canal using pink Gulp and shiners, and caught a keeper flounder. Eddie fished the public dock in the Lewes Canal. He was using Gulp and managed to catch a few keeper flounder.

Don't forget the Lewes

Harbour Marina Canal Flounder Tournament is May 17. Kyle Siler fished the canal and caught a nice keeper flounder. 12 year old Gracie Hudson caught 2 keeper fluke from the canal using minnows. Rich from "Flip N Fins" had a great day fishing on the coral beds and caught and released a 35 lb. drum.

Nearshore Wrecks & Coral Grounds

The nearshore waters are holding some big tog as well as slammer bluefish. A few flounder have been caught, but most wrecks are only holding seabass (out of season) and skates. Steve Kuhlman was out at Site Ten and caught 2 skates, 4 flounder, and ten spiny dogfish sharks. Only one of the flounder was a keeper.

The "Judy V" announces that the wait is over. The boat will begin fishing this weekend for tautog. For many anglers without access to a boat, the headboats of Indian River and Lewes Harbour Marina are a great, reasonable way to get out on the nearshore wrecks and catch a nice dinner.

Dan Lacanangelo was out on the wrecks and had a great day catching around 40 fish up to 7 pounds. The big tog were coming up cold but no need for softer baits. It's good

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to hear these fish are ready to bite.

The "Katydid" charter group was out tog fishing catching 18 keepers, including an 8.19 lb. citation worthy one! The Lead Pot in Dagsboro is having a 15% off sale May 4th through May 11th. They have a really unique tog jig colored to look just like a white legger crab.

Surf Fishing

Big blues and black drum are definitely here. Bluefish mullet rigs are catching some gator blues, and cut crab and clams on circle hook fish finding rigs are accounting for the drum. David Palencar got himself a 9 pound blue off the beach last Tuesday. Kevin Golden from Magnolia, DE weighed in a 9 lb. bluefish and a 17 inch flounder at Old Inlet Tackle caught on 3Rs beach. Alejandro Cornejo was rewarded with a big slammer bluefish while fishing the beach near the point. Margie Ayers Wheeler was out on 3Rs just before 2pm and caught a 17.5" flounder on mullet strips. Even though it was a keeper, it was set free to swim another day. Michael Wankmiller was out at Fenwick Beach and pulled a 32" blue out of the surf. The fish was caught on a mullet rig. Kevin Le finally got his chance to get out on the water and caught a 33" and a 35" blue on minnows and poppers. Nate Landis fished off Slaughter Beach using clam to catch a black drum. Butch Grodkiewck was at Broadkill Beach and caught a nice eating size drum. Tyler from Lewes Harbour Marina said the drum are ready to eat fresh clams on circle hooks. George Slavov was out fishing on 3Rs and hooked a solid bluefish.

Let's hope for continued warmer waters this week!

Till next week...

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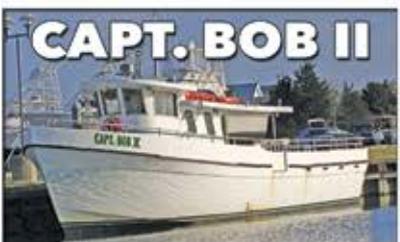
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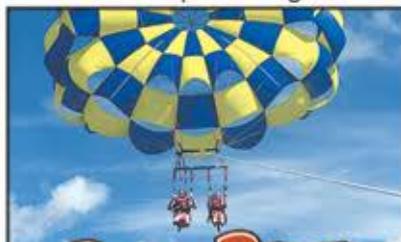


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 Bluefish	 May 2 Joe Payne Assateague 10.2 lbs.	 May 1 Tom Scott Massey's Landing 9.5 lbs.	 Weakfish		 May 2 Jim Hittches Delaware Bay 4.6 lbs.
 Black Drum		 May 3 Lacey Moffett Coral Beds 58 lbs.	 Bigeye Tuna		
 Cobia			 Bluefin Tuna		
 Summer Flounder		April 16 Craig Blocker Lewes Canal 4.46 lbs.	 Longfin Tuna		
 Sea Bass			 Yellowfin Tuna		
 Sheepshead			 Dolphin		
 Striped Bass			 Swordfish		
 Tautog	April 15 Scott Shoup Ocean Structure 8.4 lbs.		 Blue Marlin		
 Wahoo			 White Marlin		

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This is the first speckled trout we have seen in 2024! Taylor Bakke of Berlin, MD found this one just south of the Verrazano Bridge. He was fishing from the shore using a 3" paddle tail.



Cool weather and a stiff east wind did not keep anglers off the beach for the Old Inlet Bait & Tackle Spring Surf Fishing Tournament last Saturday. Several choppers were caught early.

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THE GALLEY

by Chef Christine

with the olive oil; it offsets the heat of the gochujang and adds the necessary fat to tame the acidity of the tomato-based sauce.)

Gochujang Shrimp Pasta

Ingredients:

Salt and pepper

1 lb. large peeled and deveined shrimp, cut crosswise into plump, bite-size pieces

¼ cup olive oil, plus more for serving

1 lb. spaghetti, fettuccine or linguine

12 scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced

2 (10-ounce) packages cherry tomatoes, halved

¼ cup gochujang (or other complex spicy condiment like Sriracha or chiles crisp or harissa, added to taste)

Directions:

Bring a large pot of salted water



to a boil over high. In a medium bowl, toss the chopped shrimp with ½ teaspoon salt and set aside.

While the water comes to a boil, heat ¼ cup olive oil in a large, deep skillet over medium-

high. Add the shrimp and cook, stirring frequently, just until light pink and no more gray remains, 2 to 3 minutes. (The shrimp will cook through later when tossed with the hot pasta.) Using a slotted spoon, transfer the shrimp to a bowl.

Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook according to package instructions until al dente, about 8 minutes. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, then transfer the pasta to a colander to drain.

While the pasta cooks, add the scallions to the oil in the skillet, season with ½ teaspoon salt and stir until fragrant and softened, about 2 minutes. Add the cherry tomatoes and gochujang and cook, stirring occasionally, until tomatoes are softened and sauce is glossy, about 6 minutes.

Add the cooked pasta, ½ cup of the reserved pasta water and the shrimp to the skillet and cook over medium heat, tossing until shrimp is cooked through and pasta is combined and glossy, about 2 minutes. (Add a couple tablespoons of the pasta water as needed until the sauce is slightly loose.) Season to taste with salt.

Divide pasta among bowls, spoon the shrimp and sauce on top and drizzle with additional olive oil to serve. (Be generous

Easy Garlic Parmesan Baked Flounder

Ingredients:

1 ¼ pound flounder fillet, sole fillet will also work

2 medium zucchini, halved and cut into ½-inch slices (half moons)

1 small red onion, halved and cut into ½-inch slices (half moons)

Kosher salt and black pepper

3 garlic cloves, minced

2 teaspoons dried oregano

½ teaspoon paprika



½ teaspoon cumin

Juice of 2 lemons, plus more lemon wedges for serving

¼ cup to 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil

½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Heat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Pat the fish dry and season it well with kosher salt and black pepper on both sides. Arrange the fish in a large pan and add the zucchini and onions next to it and season them with salt and pepper.

In a small mixing bowl, add the garlic, spices, lemon juice, and olive oil. Whisk to combine.

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Pour the sauce all over the fish and vegetables.

Bake in the heated oven for 7 to 10 minutes, then carefully remove the pan and sprinkle the grated parmesan over the fish and vegetables. Return the pan to the oven and bake for another 3 to 5 minutes or so until the fish is flaky and the cheese has melted some. (Flounder fillets are thin and should not take too long to cook. Be careful not to overcook them).

Bluefish with a Tomato Cream Sauce

Ingredients:

- 5 tbsp. butter
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 lb. bluefish fillets
- One lemon - one half sliced into thin slices, the other half squeezed for juice
- Finely chopped lemon peel, about a half teaspoon
- Fresh oregano
- 2 tbsp. heavy cream
- 2 tbsp. tomato juice or tomato sauce

Directions:

Melt 4 tbsp of the butter in a large skillet. Add the chopped garlic and the chopped lemon rind, and cook. Add the fillets, skin side down. Sprinkle the lemon juice and the oregano leaves. After cooking a few minutes, turn over, being careful not to tear the skin. Cook for a few minutes more on the other side. When you



take the fillets out of the pan, the skin side will be up - I think that's the prettier looking side.

Move the fillets to a platter. Add 1 tbsp more melted butter

to the pan, which will have bits of garlic and oregano in it already. Continue to heat. Add the cream and tomato juice. Pour the sauce over the fillets. Garnish with lemon slices.

Fresh & Simple Crab Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 medium lemon
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped chives
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning
- 1 pound jumbo lump crab meat
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Serving options: lettuce leaves, halved avocados, or buttered, toasted hot dog buns

Directions:



Prepare the following, placing them in a large bowl: finely grate the zest of 1 medium lemon until you have 1/2 teaspoon; juice the lemon until you have 1 teaspoon juice. Finely chop until you have 2 tablespoons chives. Add 1/4 cup mayonnaise and 1/2 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning, and stir to combine.

Pick through 1 pound fresh jumbo lump crab meat for any shells, then add the crab meat to the dressing and stir until combined. Taste and season with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper as needed. Serve plain or, if desired, on a bed of lettuce, scooped into halved avocados, or in a buttered, toasted hot dog bun.

Lemon Butter



It was the first trip and first fish of the season for Pat DeGroot in late April. He went trolling in the Thorofare and reeled in this 18" keeper flounder in only 4 feet of water. The water was 57° and warming on the outgoing tide. Bait was mud minnows.

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Baked White Fish

Ingredients:

- 4 6 oz. white fish fillets (such as tilapia, cod or whitefish)
- ¼ cup butter (unsalted, softened)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons minced herbs (such as parsley, oregano, basil)
- 1 lemon (zested and thinly sliced)

Directions:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.

In a small bowl mix together softened butter with garlic, salt, pepper, minced herbs and lemon zest.

Spray a baking dish with cooking spray and place fish fillets in a single layer.

Brush butter mixture evenly on top of fish then top with lemon slices.



Bake until fish flakes easily with a fork, about 15-20 minutes.

Oven Baked Weakfish

Ingredients:

- 2 weakfish fillets (4 oz each)
- Handful of cherry tomatoes
- ¼ cup chopped fresh baby dill
- ¼ cup chopped green onions
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 teaspoon white pepper

1 teaspoon olive oil (or olive oil spray)

½ lemon

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees

Rinse and pat dry weakfish fillets. Brush baking dish with olive oil and place fillets on top. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and white pepper.

Arrange cherry tomatoes around the fish. Add dill and green onions on top of the fish. Thinly slice lemon and place on



top of fillets.

Bake for 15 minutes.

Lightened Up New England Clam Chowder

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp light butter
- 3 ribs of celery
- 1/2 cup diced white onion, about one medium onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp crushed white pepper or black pepper
- 1/2 tsp old bay seasoning
- 1 tsp fresh thyme, about 4 sprigs, or 1/2 TSP dried
- 1 tbsp flour
- 8 oz bottle of clam juice
- 2 cups milk of choice, we used fat-free milk
- 1 can of clams, 6.5 oz
- 1.5 lbs baby gold potatoes

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1 bay leaf

1 tbsp fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

Directions:

Chop the celery and dice the white onion. Then, cut the potatoes in half and then into quarters.

Add the light butter to your dutch oven or large pot and saute the celery, onions, garlic, salt, pepper, old bay seasoning, and fresh chopped thyme. Cook these ingredients for about 5 minutes or until the onions are translucent and the celery is soft.

Dust the flour on the ingredients in the dutch oven and mix.

Add the clam juice and milk to the dutch oven. Also, drain the juice from the canned clams into the dutch oven, but do not add the clams yet, reserve them for later.

Add the chopped potatoes and bay leaf to the dutch oven. Bring everything to a low simmer. It takes about 10 minutes for everything to start summering. Once it starts simmering, allow another 10 minutes for the ingredients to simmer, or until the potatoes are cooked. You can check if the potatoes are done by inserting a fork. Also, make sure to stir occasionally so the ingredients don't stick.

Once the potatoes are cooked, remove the bay leaf from the dutch oven. Then, use a potato masher or a stick blender to mash the potatoes in the dutch oven to the desired consistency.

Add the clams to the dutch oven and simmer for 5 more minutes.

When the soup is done, sprinkle some chopped flat-leaf parsley on top and optional soup crackers. Enjoy! §

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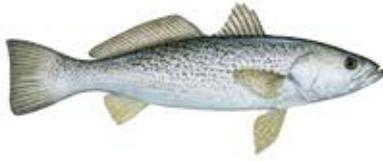
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The Old Inlet Bait & Tackle held their Spring Surf Fishing Tournament last Saturday. 170 anglers dealt with cooler temps and a stiff easterly wind to compete for cash, prizes and of course, the trophies! The action was dominated by tog and some nice stripers in the mix. Jim Haug took the top spot and \$750 in the Open Division with 6 big bluefish followed by Jeff Kirby (\$500) and Dennis McCain (\$250). Kelsey Cycyk secured 1st Place and \$250 in the Women's Division for her 2 big blues with Amy Dixon (\$100) in 2nd Place and a tie for 3rd between Anita Chandler and Katie Hall (\$25 each). Ryan Stetser took home a cool \$1,000 for the largest fish, a 49" rock, and Dennis McCain earned the largest payout at \$1,510 by winning the Bluefish Calcutta with a 35" gator.

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 BLACK SEA BASS 13" minimum / 15 per person/day May 15 - September 30 October 10 - December 31	 BLUEFISH No minimum size 3 per day / 5 per day Charter	 BLACK DRUM 16" minimum 3 per person/day	 COBIA 37" Minimum • 1 per person or vessel
 CROAKER 8" Minimum • No Limit	 RED DRUM 20-27" minimum 5 per person/day	 SHEEPSHEAD No limit	 SPECKLED TROUT 12" minimum No creel limit
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It was just about twilight when Kevin Malone of Salisbury, MD got a big hit! This 43" rock was his first fish of the season and was caught with very expensive peelers. He was fishing near Holland Island in the Chesapeake Bay with Capt. Todd Hudson on the "REELAX II".



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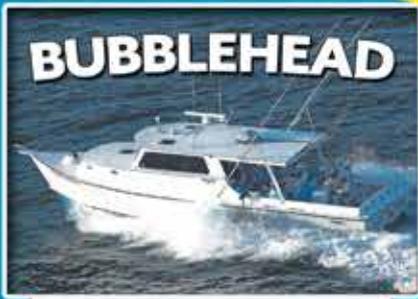
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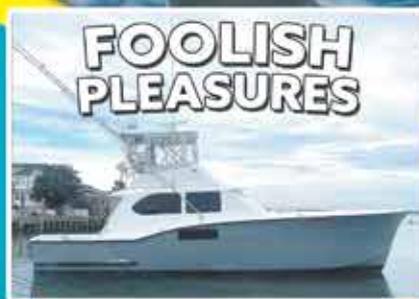
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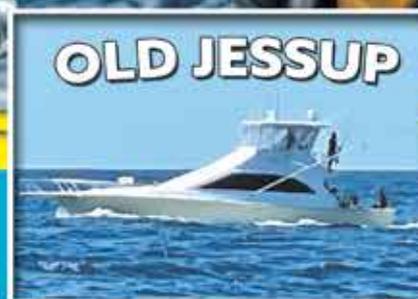
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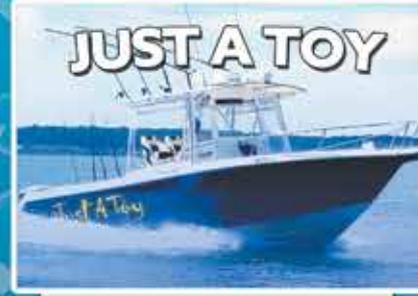
CAH-CHING

35' Cabo Flybridge
Capt. Steve Martin
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OUTLAW X

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Capt. Mike Hutchins
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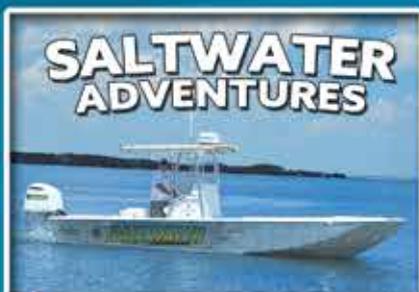
JUST A TOY

30' Century
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ON THE RUN

28' Parker
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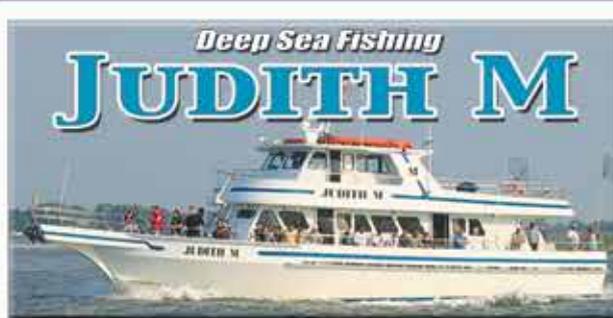
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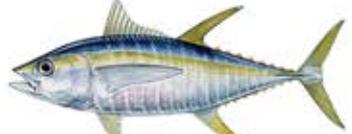
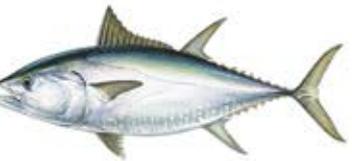
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Steve Lewis from Laytonsville, MD slipped onto the sands of Assateague Island late last week to try his luck. He landed this 36" black drum from the suds using sand fleas tipped with Flea Fishbites.

2023 FEDERAL SIZE & CREEL LIMITS

3-200 Miles

 <p>BLUE MARLIN 99" Lower Jaw Fork Length No Retention Limit</p>	 <p>YELLOWFIN TUNA 27" Curved Fork Length 3 per person/day</p>	 <p>BIGEYE TUNA 27" Curved Fork Length No Retention Limit</p>	 <p>GOLDEN TILEFISH No minimum • 8 per person/day</p>
 <p>WHITE MARLIN 66" Lower Jaw Fork Length No Retention Limit</p> <p>NOTE: Blue Marlin, White Marlin and Roundscale Marlin combined 250 Limit</p>	 <p>BLUEFIN TUNA 27" to <47" curved fork length 2 per vessel/day or trip 47" to < 73" curved fork length 1 per vessel/day or trip 27" to <47" curved fork length 3 per Charter/day or trip 27" to <47" curved fork length 6 per Headboat/day or trip 47" to < 73" curved fork length 2 per Headboat/day or trip</p>	 <p>SWORDFISH 47" Lower Jaw Fork Length 1 per person / 4 per vessel (Rec) 1 per person / 6 per vessel (Charter) 1 per person / 15 per Headboat</p>	 <p>BLUELINE TILEFISH 5/1 - 10/31 3 per person (Recreational) 5 per person Uninspected (Charter) 7 per person Inspected (Charter)</p>
 <p>DOLPHIN No minimum Length Boat Limit 54 Charter Limit Daily 10 per angler</p>	<p>SAILFISH Minimum Length 63" • No Retention Limit</p>	 <p>WAHOO No Minimum Length • 2 per person/day</p>	

<h3>SHARKS</h3> <h2>AUTHORIZED SPECIES</h2>	<p>No Minimum Fork Length Atlantic Sharpnose, Bonnethead</p> <p>54" Minimum Fork Length Atlantic Blacktip, Bull, Lemon, Nurse, Spinner, Tiger, Blue, Common Thresher, Porbeagle, Finetooth, Atlantic Blacknose</p> <p>78" Minimum Fork Length Great Hammerhead, Scalloped Hammerhead, Smooth Hammerhead</p> <p>NOTE: Only 1 shark from the lists above may be retained per vessel per trip. In addition, 1 Atlantic Sharpnose, 1 Bonnethead and 1 Oceanic Whitetip may be retained per person per trip. If a hammerhead shark is retained, no tunas, billfish or swordfish may be retained.</p>	<h3>PROHIBITED SHARKS</h3> <p>Atlantic Angel, Basking, Bigeye Sand Tiger, Bigeye Sixgill, Bigeye Thresher, Bignose, Caribbean Reef, Caribbean Sharpnose, Dusky, Galapagos, Longfin Mako, Narrowtooth, Night, Oceanic Whitetip, Sandbar, Sand Tiger, Sevengill, Shortfin Mako, Silky, Sixgill, Smalltail, Whale, White</p> <p>Resources: eregulations.com & NOAA.gov</p>
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Rick's Bait & Tackle in Longneck, DE saw several nice fish come by to measure and weigh. Tim Scott was fishing at Massey's Landing and hooked this 32" and 9.5 lb. bluefish using finger mullet. It also set a new record for Heaviest Bluefish for DE so far. He also reported a few other hits that broke off. Lacey Moffett brought in a 58 lb. black drum she raised from the Coral Beds in the Delaware Bay also setting a new Heaviest Fish record!

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Snarky Lines

by Capt. Mark Sampson



Do Fish Think?

Anthropomorphism is a fancy term used to describe the process by which people compare or describe animal characteristics or behavior to that of humans. "She runs like a deer. He's dumb as an ox. That gorilla looks just like my uncle Sid." You get the idea.

But when you get right down to it, comparing the appearance or traits of one species to another is really kind of silly. I cringe when I hear someone say something like, "My little dog Fifi is almost human, he wears a sweater, sits on my lap while I'm driving, sleeps in my bed, and only eats fresh cooked chicken". Yeah right, that's like saying a snowman is almost human because you put a hat on its head and shoved two chunks of charcoal and a carrot in its face!

When it comes to fish, we might say that someone swims like one or drinks like one, but besides that there's not a lot of anthropomorphism going on between people and the scaly creatures we pursue. Inside we might have some similar

organs, but on the outside the only commonality we share is that we both have two eyes and a mouth!

So despite my aversion to Anthropomorphism, I've been kind of wondering what fish think about these days. Actually, I'm not sure if fish actually "think" at all, at least the way we humans do, but if they do, I'd like to know what exactly might go on through the mind of one when it fins its way up to one of our artificial reefs for the first time.

When Mr. Earnest C Bass catches his first glimpse of a New York City subway car parked on the floor of the ocean is he going to wonder such things as; Where in the heck did this long boxy thing come from? Is there something inside there that's going to eat me? What's that crazy spray paint writing all about? Or will he be more concerned about where he can get a ticket for the "E" route to Manhattan?

Maybe Mr. C Bass would stop and wonder if it's some type

of strange coral formation that just grew up off the bottom. Or perhaps he'd wonder why he didn't notice the alien craft last year when he was traveling along that exact same migration route. (I know I'm not supposed to use the word "alien" anymore - but there you go.)

What if our friend happened upon something like an armored personnel carrier? Would he know that it was a vehicle designed to carry troops into battle and then wonder if his watery realm was suddenly under siege by the same land dwelling creatures that are always chugging overhead in those things they call boats? Or would he just stop and wonder how in the world those goofy humans could lose such a big chunk of metal to the ocean?

Warships, cranes, Coast Guard vessels, barges, commercial fishing boats, sailboats, concrete rubble, cinder blocks, pipes, bridge structures, trans-Atlantic telephone cable, rubber tires, "everything" including (I suppose) more

www.coastalfisherman.net than just a couple kitchen sinks have found their way to the bottom of the oceans, bays, rivers, lakes and ponds. And while our good natured intent is to provide fish a better place to live (aren't we so nice) I can't help but fear that we might just be warping the little pea-brains of the very fish we're trying to help.

Before reef building became a trendy way to get rid of our extra "stuff", if something went down it was an accident, a mistake, or an attempt by someone to ruin someone else's day by purposely sinking their boat or shooting down their aircraft. But these days there are so many objects that are purposely being sent to a watery grave that the local residents below must think (if they think at all) that the terrestrial beings (that's us) have finally run out of places on land to store everything.

"OK Frank, when are you finally going to do something with that armored personnel carrier that's been rusting away in our backyard? You haven't driven it since Normandy and you're never going to get around to fixing it up. Get it out of here so we can put a swing set up for the kids!"

"Sure thing honey, when I

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get home from work and just before supper I'll take it 20-miles offshore and sink it." "While you're at it, why don't you take along that big pile of cinder blocks, the forklift, snow plow, concrete rubble, collection of cement bird baths, and other inert objects you've got piled up in the garage. It would be nice to be able to park our cars inside again. And don't forget the old kitchen sink lying beside the workbench!"

They say that "one man's trash is another man's treasure" but I guess more importantly than that, one man's trash has become a lot of fishes' homesteads. Which has me thinking... if we're going to send this stuff to the bottom of the sea and expect the fish to recognize it as a place to live, then maybe a little more effort should be put into making the debris a bit more "homey" for the new occupants. I mean, if we want Mr. C Bass to feel

comfortable inside a cinder block (so we can catch and eat him someday) maybe we should consider giving the structure a nice coat of paint, some curtains, and certainly a sturdy screen door to keep out those pesky sea lice and jellyfish!

I also wonder if this whole reef building thing might be an extreme example of anthropomorphism gone wild. Have the reef building gurus here on land decided that fish need to live in the same kind of structures as we air breathing humanoids do? Fish might be smarter than some of us imagine. After all, they spend an awfully long time in school. So if they actually do "think" about things like we do, maybe they're becoming increasingly concerned about all the stuff we're dropping down to the seafloor and that the humans up above might be planning to conquer and colonize their

home turf.

I also wonder if anyone has considered that by providing Mr. C Bass and his buddies with a bunch of concrete, steel, and military equipment that we're setting them up with everything needed to build themselves some nice little cities complete with concrete roadways, subway systems, communication equipment and certainly enough military hardware to protect their watery realm from threats that come from above - and "yes" that would be us!

Like I said, I'm not so keen on anthropomorphism, so I don't want to sound like I'm crying "wolf" about something that I should just "clam" up over. But like an "elephant" I just can't forget things like this so I'm trying to be wise as an "owl" rather than stubborn as a "mule" about this state of confusion we might be creating beneath the waves. §



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Capt. Rich Harpel was out and about again at the Coral Grounds in the Delaware Bay. This big black drum hit hard on a hi-lo drum rig breaking it in half and getting hooked on the lower one! He was using a 4 oz weight with surf clams from Lewes Harbour Marina. The fish was quickly released.



The docks were action packed down at the Oceanic Fishing Pier in Ocean City last week. Their anglers saw a big run of hickory shad with most caught on a spec rig.

OCEAN CITY INLET TIDES & MOON PHASES

WED. MAY 8	High 08:38 am High 09:15 pm	Low 02:37 am Low 02:27 pm
THUR. MAY 9	High 09:27 am High 10:04 pm	Low 03:27 am Low 03:13 pm
FRI. MAY 10	High 10:15 am High 10:54 pm	Low 04:19 am Low 03:59 pm
SAT. MAY 11	High 11:02 am High 11:43 pm	Low 05:13 am Low 04:48 pm
SUN. MAY 12	High 11:50 am High -----	Low 06:09 am Low 05:42 pm
MON. MAY 13	High 12:35 am High 12:42 pm	Low 07:07 am Low 06:40 pm
TUE. MAY 14	High 01:31 am High 01:41 pm	Low 08:03 am Low 07:41 pm
WED. MAY 15 First Qtr. Moon	High 02:31 am High 02:47 pm	Low 08:55 am Low 08:43 pm

source: usharbors.com

Add 1.5 hours for bay tides at the Rt. 50 Bridge.
 Indian River Inlet - add 25 minutes to high tide
 Delaware Bay Entrance - subtract 1 hour 25 minutes to high tide
 - subtract 45 minutes to low tide
 Wachapreague, VA - add 4 minutes for high tide - 21 minutes for low tide
 Quinby Inlet, VA - subtract 6 minutes for high tide

These tides are only meant to be a guide, as tides can be affected by storms and weather fronts.

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Luke Peternel had a perfect day on the beach at Assateague Island fishing with his dog Charlie last week. The pair soaked a mullet rig in the suds and landed this 33" bluefish.

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VIRGINIA FISHING REPORT

by Capt. Matt Abell



Well they say April showers bring may flounders... I mean flowers. The fact is the flowers and the flounder are popping up and making the Eastern shore an awesome place to spend time and tide with friends and family doing what we love most!

The seaside has continued to be a great place to flounder around. Hungry flat fish have devoured Sea Hawk flounder rigs tipped with silversides and minnows with a side of swimming mullet Gulp to sweeten the deal. We had the best results on baits displayed on pink teasers in water depths of less than 10 feet. In fact, we had a few fish attack baits on the flats with as little as 2 feet of water. It's truly exciting to watch

these awesome ambush predators spring into action and engulf your bait right before your eyes. Remember, more important than any rig or bait, the necessity for clean water is probably the single most important factor to ensure flaky white fillets on the dinner table.

The coastal bays have also provided some speckled sport. Along with rock, specks have graced us with their presence as anglers test their skills casting soft plastics and suspending baits around creek mouths and other bait laden structure. This fishery is just beginning and should gain strength as the month of May makes our way to a warmer Eastern Shore.

The serene sands of the barrier islands are supporting successful excursions in pursuit of both striped and spotted subjects. Surf anglers have stretched their line on reds and blacks as well as rock (which must be released in VA). These trophies have been tempted to take a ride through the suds with modified fish finder as well as hi-lo rigs tipped with a variety of baits including crab clam and sand fleas.

This past week we received the first of a "hard" sign spring here to stay...Soft crabs! And if the crabs are shed'n it's definitely time to get fish'n!

The grassy shallows of the sounds have been the scene

of some speck and spot tail action as anglers set and wait to lure unsuspecting subjects over the gunwale with chunks of crab on bottom rigs. There has been a "spec" of activity for these throwing lures as topwater plugs walk the dog right into the mouths of waiting prizes. We also got to try the new Gulp violet haze baits with great success that led to a bent rod or two.

Remember, to save the pursuits of stripes till the last half of May to help ensure your citations are for fish and not violations.

So as the weather warms and the days get longer don't let your time and chance to enjoy the Eastern Shore grow short. It really doesn't matter, from the salty Atlantic, to the scenic Chesapeake there's always something to do in this wonderful place that we call home! §

2024 VIRGINIA REGULATIONS

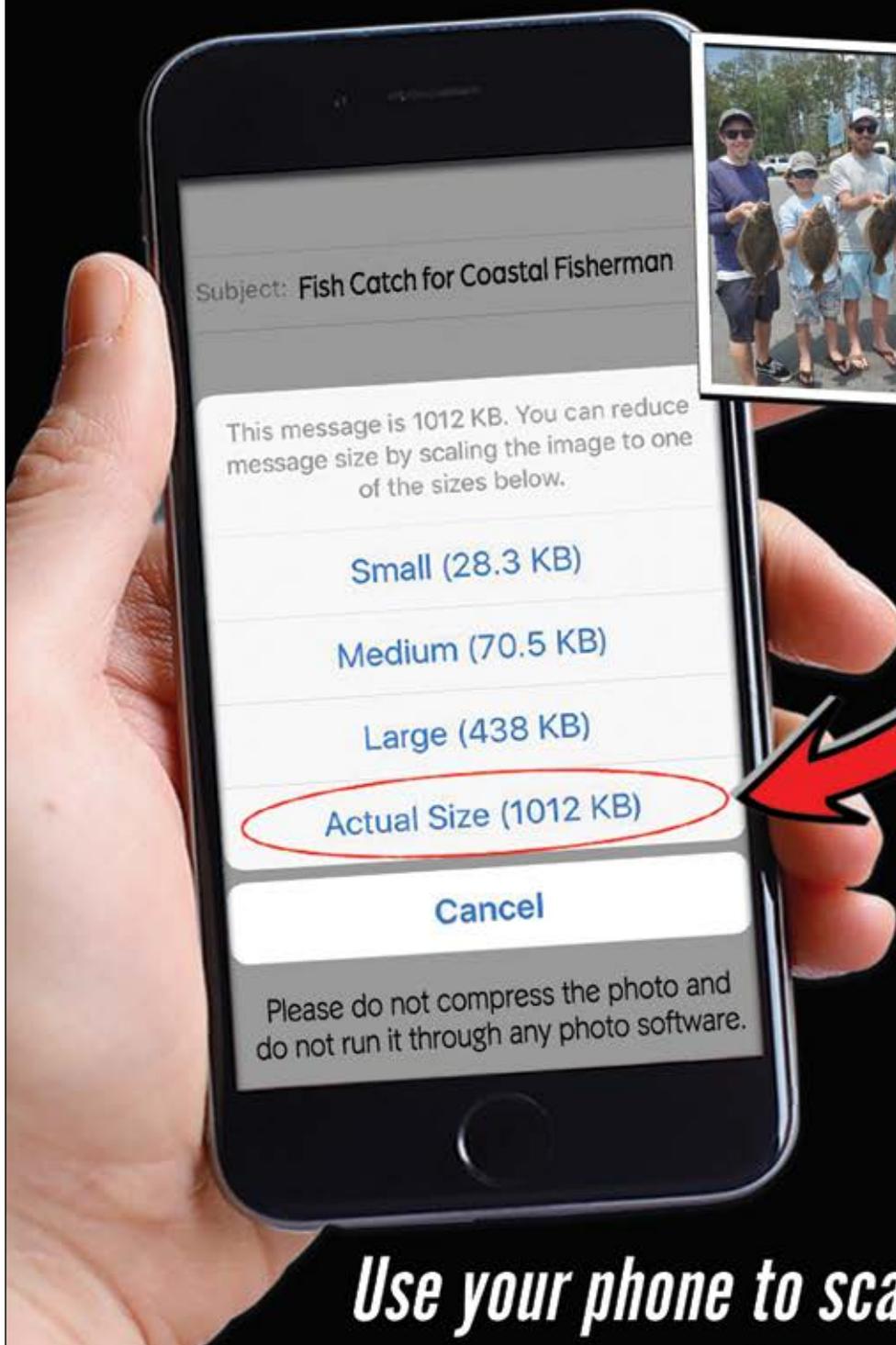
STATE WATERS ONLY

 <p>BLACK SEA BASS 13" minimum / 15 per person/day May 15 - July 6 August 9 - December 31</p>	 <p>BLUEFISH No minimum 3 per person/day or 5 per person/day headboat All Year</p>	 <p>BLACK DRUM 16" minimum 1 per person/day All Year</p>	 <p>COBIA 40" minimum / Only 1>50" 1 per person/day • 2 per boat/day 6/15 - 9/15</p>
 <p>CROAKER No minimum 50 per person/day All Year</p>	 <p>RED DRUM 18-26" minimum 3 per person/day All Year</p>	 <p>SHEEPSHEAD No minimum 4 per person/day All Year</p>	 <p>SPECKLED TROUT 14" minimum 5 per person/day All Year Only 1>24"</p>
 <p>STRIPED BASS 28-31" 1 per person/day 1/1-3/31 & 5/16-12/31</p>	 <p>FLOUNDER 16" minimum 4 per person/day All Year</p>	 <p>TAUTOG 16" minimum 4 per person/day 1/1-5/15 & 7/1-12/31</p>	 <p>WEAKFISH 12" minimum 1 per person/day All Year</p>

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