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COASTAL FISHMAN

VOLUME 50 • • • MAY 21, 2025



Lloyd Whitehead, of Harborside Bar and Grill, fishing the opening weekend of sea bass season on the "Judy V". This fishing trip coincided with Lloyd's birthday and as a present to himself and the "Judy V", he caught the first flounder of the "Judy V's" season. The boat almost reached their limit of both flounder and sea bass. To see the entirety of Lloyd's day of fishing, he will also be featured in the upcoming episode of Hooked On OC.



Mike Depalma gets the award for the first sea bass caught of 2025. Brian was fishing aboard the “Bet Sea” and caught the unlucky fish at 8:15 am. Besides having the honor of catching the first of the season Brian also reported limiting out on sea bass.



Despite the opening of sea bass season flounder fishing has still been a hit. Kevin Stauffer, Justin Ruhlman, and Donald Grieco have proven that with their seven keeper flounder, with the biggest coming in at 19”. The three used minnows and squid at the OC Inlet. The crew also brought back a lone 17” weakfish.

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While surf fishing on Assateague for striped bass, Russell Lederman, a frequent surf fisherman, hooked up this 43" rockfish, at the 23 km marker. When he brought the fish to shore Russell realized the fish wasn't the only thing he was bringing in. Russell soon saw that the fish had been previously hooked and brought a rod with it. Russell made a Facebook post about his story hoping to find the rod and reel's owner. Not long after he received a reply and learned it belonged to Joe Barranco and Mary Ann McGonigal. Russell met up with Joe and returned the reel, learning that he lost it the previous day all the way at the MD/VA fence line.



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Anglers Avery Golden, Joe Flounlacker, and Phil Lambrinos are lined up with their 12 keeper flat fish. These flounder ranged from 16½" to 22". The trio were fishing on the "Christian Lee" using Gulp, and are coming with plenty of food for dinner.

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up the Coastal Fisherman every week from May
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Welcome back to another offshore fishing report, and another week to say its time to hurry up and wait for just a little longer. The warm water remains far out of range with the main body of the gulf stream about 50 miles offshore of the Norfolk , with a loose edged eddy deep behind the Baltimore and Wilmington canyons. It is these eddies spinning off and pushing down from the north east that deserve the most attention as they often carry the first tunas of the season as well as the most consistent fishing in general. Outside of the warm water there have been a few bluefins

captured with rumors of some fish being caught in the Norfolk canyon. Above us, anglers off of New Jersey are enjoying the beginning of some inshore bluefins with a few fish being caught on spinning tackle. Below us, North Carolina continues to produce solid charter fishing with catches of mahi and kite-caught yellowfins being thrown on the dock along with a mixture of billfish releases. Congratulations to the crew of the Weldor's Ark on their 584 lbs. blue marlin, bringing home 1st place in the Hatteras Village Open. We experienced slower fishing during our

tournament days, having a few teaser bites that would not switch over to a pitch bait as well as jumping off a sailfish. The "RoShamBo" is now back home at the Fishing Center where we are excited to begin charter fishing for a few weeks before moving back south to Morehead for the Big Rock tournament. As I rig up our tackle to prepare for our season I figured it to be a good time to go over some terminal tackle basics for those just getting into offshore fishing or maybe thinking about investing in some new gear. For tuna fishing we use a combination of 50's and 80w reels, the 50's we spool with 60 pound mono mainline and have about 30 feet of 90 lbs. fluoro leader unless chunking, then we may go down on the leader all the way to 25 lbs. test. These 50's are used to pull ballyhoos and lighter baits as we use the 80's to pull our heavier long rigger baits as well as all of our plastics such as spreader bars and chains. These 80's have a few hundred yards of 200 lbs. backing topped with a few hundred more

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yards of 100 lbs. mainline, rods that will be dedicated to pulling bars/chains will get a 250 pound wind-on and long riggers will have 30 feet of 90-180 lbs. fluoro depending on the situation. While this is what we use, those shopping on a budget could easily get by with 50's and 30's, using 30's for meat baits and 50's for both baits and bars, although I would recommend a stiffer rod for pulling plastic as well as adding some backing to your spool in case of a bigeye or blue marlin. All of our tackle shops are filled with many options and knowledgeable people to help you get a setup that works for both your boat and your wallet. Anglers this week have stayed busy with catches of tile fish and sea bass, both producing solid catches when the weather allows. The forecast for Memorial Day weekend looks a little breezy for Saturday, but falling out nicely for Sunday and Monday. I hope everyone has a chance to enjoy the holiday weekend with family, and wish you good fishing as we reflect on those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.



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The first local blue fin tunas have come in. Colin Long caught this 36" blue fin tuna as well two others on board the "Irish Hound" with Capt. Brian Wuest with mates Mike Tryon and Larry Dougherty as well James Sloat. The crew released two other blue fins and boated 10 tile fish. The tunas were caught at 200 fathoms on a Sterling Tackle Splash Bar. Hopefully this is the sign for a good season to come.

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INCLUDE IN THE EMAIL:

- Angler's full name and town
- Names & towns of others in photo
- Weight and/or length of fish
- Bait/lure used
- Location of catch
- Name of boat, if any

Please do not compress the photo and do not run it through any photo software.

- Have the angler facing into the sun to minimize shadows
- Make sure the side of the fish is facing flat towards the camera
- Set your camera to the best quality and largest picture size available
- If you are using a cell phone, make sure it is taking photos at the largest setting possible
- Shoot vertical photos & always Smile!

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Photo Contest Free To Enter





Mark Debinski recently had a trip to Costa Rica, where he caught this 55 lbs. mahi. Mark's Costa Rican fishing adventure took him to the Golfito region of Costa Rica located not far from Panama. Hopefully Mark's good mahi fishing in Costa Rica is seen here in Ocean City soon.



Hopefully Kody Knieriem's teacher doesn't see this because according to his dad Korey, they skipped school to catch these six keeper flatfish. Kody and his dad trolled through the Thorofare in shallow water. We think Kody and his dad made the right choice on how to spend their day.

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OCEAN CITY

FISHING REPORT

by Capt. BJ Pietryak



This past week In Ocean City brought warmer temperatures, along with a ton of flounder in the inlet area. It has been the best flounder fishing in the bay that we have seen in years. Many anglers reported limits of flounder within 2 hours. Near shore we began our sea bass season. Although the start was not on fire, many anglers did manage to find a limit of 15 fish with the other anglers catching at least enough for dinner. Surf fishing remains strong with big black drum being taken from Assateague Island on a daily basis.

Nearshore Wrecks and Reefs

The start of the anticipated sea bass season came on

Thursday the 15th, Most of the head boats as well as many private boats hit the nearshore grounds in search of the black beauties. Some anglers found the correct spot and had limits of fish, however many anglers found the fish picky even in this early season and struggled to find enough keepers to make their quota. Small jigs remain the best way of targeting the bigger fish. Fresh clams and squid did their job of tempting the fish but left many boats below the full limits allowed. The deeper water near the Jacks Spot and Great Eastern Reef appeared to be the best spots. "Fin Chaser Sportfishing" kicked the season off with Bruce and the boys looking to fill their coolers with bass.

Although the bite was not on fire, they did manage the day one limit. Monty Hawkins of the "Morning Star" stated despite the morning fog the seas remained pleasant for their opening day. The fish however did not want to respond as well, causing anglers to work hard for every bite. A few anglers did find a limit, but many fell just short of their prize with most anglers just getting into double digits. "Wreck Dog Fishing" ran two trips opening day and squeaked out a limit of bass on each.

Back Bays and Inlets

The back bays have been producing better than we have seen in years. The inlet area as well as the main thoroughfare has been

giving up limits of flounder on a regular basis. Hi-lo rigs such as the Deadly Double or Clacker Rigs are producing best with Aqua clear rigs a close second. Early morning moving tides are showing the best results at the inlet with many boats producing even 4 man limits in just a couple of hours. Rockfish, tog, and bluefish are also at the inlet along the rocks. Scott Lenex of Fish in OC show had a great day with his wife catching a 2 man limit of flounder at the inlet. His Deadly Doubles tipped with Gulp and minnows did the trick. While out at the inlet and filming the show, he saw several other boats boasting 3 and 4 man limits. John Foreman, along with Big B limited out on flounder in 3 hours. He stated the shallow water was on fire, the likes of which haven't been seen in years. Kevin McNielis reported he caught 34 fluke including their 2 man limit

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in 3 hours. Peter Renzi was blessed with a 4 fish limit using Gulp and an Atlantic Tackle rig. Along with all the flounder being caught in the bay, stripers and blues are still at the RT 50 Bridge. Steve Bassett Jr got his first slot striper while fishing off the bridge.

Big Bird Cropper was out again this past week managing several rockfish and blues from the bridge pilings as well as a couple limits of flounder near the inlet. Benjamin Campbell got it done using a Roy Rig near the RT 90 bridge catching a ton of bluefish.

Surf Fishing

Assateague Island remains very productive despite the warmer weather. Anglers on a daily basis are dragging big black drum up onto the beach using sand fleas, fish bites, and clams. The southern area near the Virginia side is your best chance at scoring one of these big fish. Early morning and late afternoon are the best times with a high tide being the most productive. A fish finder rig along with a hi-lo rig appear to be producing quality fish at about the same rate. David Moore had a productive week catching several large black drum. He stated the

only problem is that the skates and sharks are really becoming a nuisance of late. Kyle Gabriele got lucky Wednesday and landed a big drum using sand fleas and fish bites. Carl Palmedo hauled in his first black drum of the season using a hi-lo rig and Fish Bites in clam flavor. Chadd Cullum took a break from the drum and targeted and landed a nice over slot rockfish from the beach on Thursday. John Darwicki caught 30 skates along with a nice 35" striped bass. Bobby West landed 13 drum in 4 days all from the same cut on the beach. Catching even two fish is a great accomplishment, however 13 in 4 days is at least...epic! Kevin Fitzke got his PB rockfish at 35 inches. Ronald Marquez hauled in 2 stripers at 38 and 40 inches along with a whole bunch of skates. Evan Donohue managed a big 33" rock on sand fleas. Steve Lewes and son fished the outgoing tide and landed a perfect eating sized black on their trip to the beach. Kevin Lafleur felt his 24" drum was a bit small, however to me that is the perfect size.

Clams and Crabs

Clamming on the island has really started to heat up with anglers raking up between



Richard 'Delicious' Daiker with Scott Andrews showing their limit of flounder and blues. Their largest flounder measured up to 23". All of these fish were caught outside the South Jetty using deadly doubles and gulp.

60 and 100 clams in an hour. Crabbing on the north end of the island has also started to become productive with 5-8 keepers per pot. Many crabbers are finding the open top traps are doing better

than the traditional style pots. Bunker and chicken are working as bait for both crab pots as well as the open top traps.

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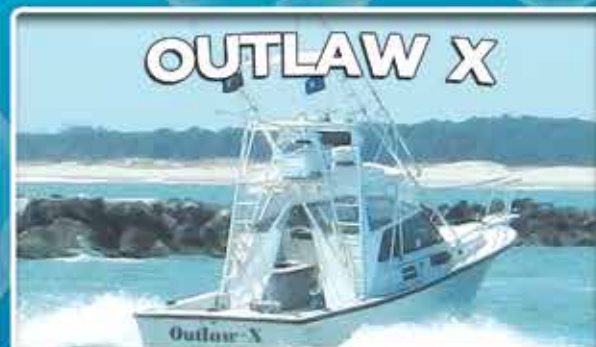
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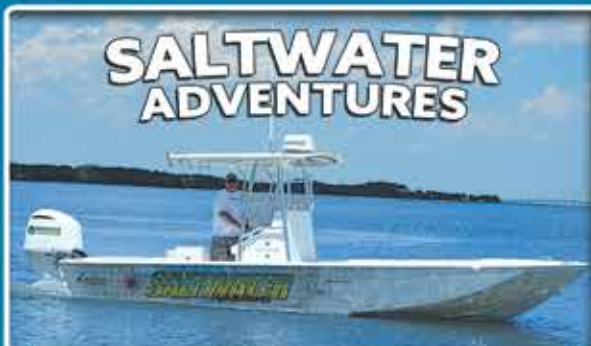
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Jim Giles, Jim Motsko, and Jim Motsko's grandson, Cole Myers, proudly displaying their bounty of flounder. The crew was fishing with Alan Ring from Sea Hawk in Pocomoke and moved to an "undisclosed location" in Virginia. The group caught their limit of keeper flounder. While the fish may not be as big as Jim usually sees in the summer the group undoubtedly had a great trip.



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The "FV Unreel" had an amazing start to sea bass season catching their limit of sea bass. Headed by Capt. Joe Schweiger, anglers Zachary Baeder, Brett Long, and Camryn Baeder caught sea bass that were up to 18".



Patrick Love on the sands of Assateague after he caught three black drum. Patrick was fishing an incoming tide and ended up with 8, 10 and 15 lbs. fish from his trip. He was casting using sand fleas as bait.



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Captain Matthew Moran, of Ocean City, MD, holding a potential world record machacca in Costa Rica on the Corobicí River. This fish weighed in at 4 lbs. 9 oz. and was caught on a fly rod using 4 lbs. tippet. While the fish is not the largest machacca ever caught, it is the largest caught using a fly rod. This fish is over 2 lbs. heavier than the previous record on a fly rod. Matthew used an imitation fig as bait, as machaccas feed on fruit. A great fish that hopefully gets accepted as a world record, especially being caught by a local angler.

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Dean Correll presenting his 29" 13½ lbs. black drum. Dean caught his photo-worthy fish in the Delaware Bay, weighing at Rick's Bait and Tackle in Long Neck, DE.



Angler Chase Hyser caught this 34" 10.6 lbs. blue fish while in the Rehoboth Bay. Chase's fish is just under the largest caught in Delaware that we have seen this year. Pictured at Rick's Bait and Tackle.



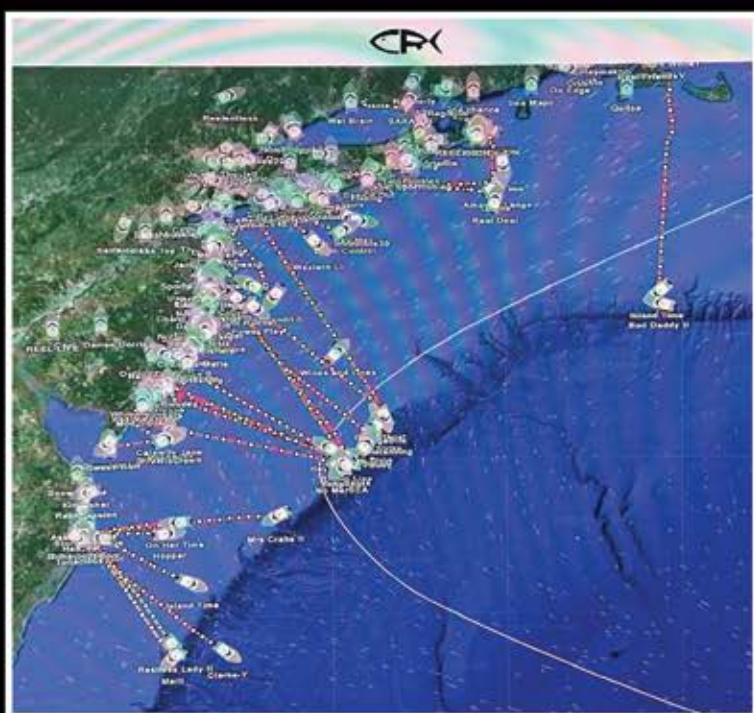
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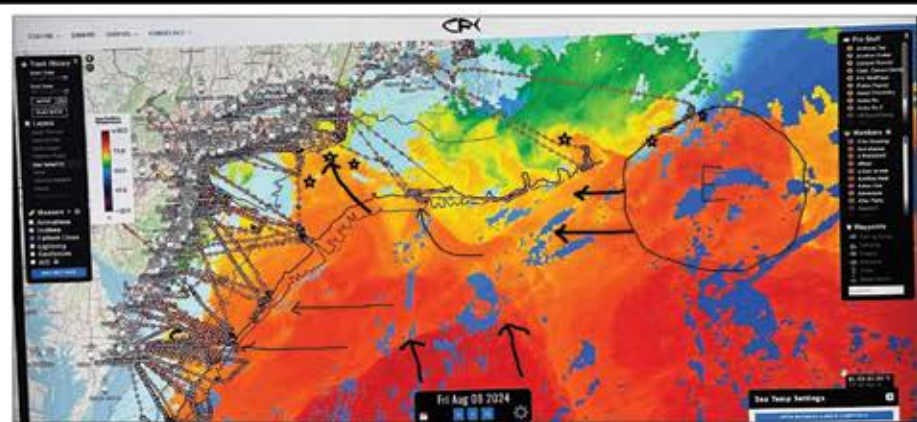
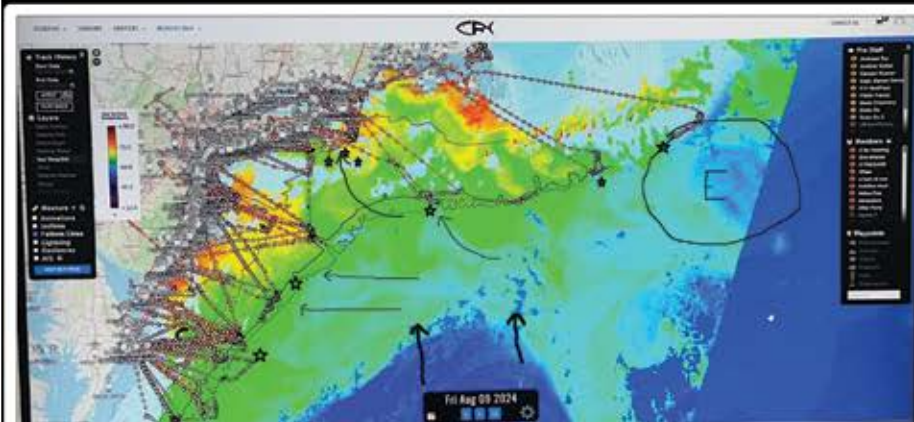
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FISHING CHARTERS



Capt. Chris Huk of the Restless Lady II had a great opening day of sea bass season reporting "sore arms and full coolers." The Restless Lady II always provides good trips to their anglers.



Mike Crue caught two keeper sea bass aboard the "Miss Kathleen." Most likely not as hot of a start as anybody wanted, but after a few weeks the sea bass should be practically jumping into the boat.

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Despite the slow start for the MD charter boats Skipjack Sportfishing in DE hit their limit catching 105 sea bass in total. The crew reported that one of the anglers Dan caught a 3.1 lbs. sea bass which is the heaviest caught in DE this year.



"Morning Star" Capt. Monty Hawkins said it was a slow start to the sea bass season, but after staying out late, half of the anglers on the trip had hit their limit.

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FISHING CHARTERS



The "Lucky Break" had a great trip through the back bays and inlet, catching flounder, tautog, bluefish, shad, and rockfish. This angler would surely agree that the back bays are doing well right now.

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FISHING CHARTERS



Capt. Chris Mizurak of the "Angler" reported a slow opening day of the sea bass season. As the water warms up more fish will come with it and the "Angler" will catch their limits.



Capt. Kane Bounds of the "Fish Bound" also ventured out for opening day of sea bass fishing. He reported an excellent start to saying that big groups have all hit their limits. Despite have a strong sea bass start he hasn't seen any flounder yet.

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HEAVIEST

Fish of the Year

2025

(AS REPORTED TO THE COASTAL FISHERMAN - TIES GO TO FIRST FISH REPORTED. HOOK & LINE ONLY)



| Species | OCEAN CITY | DELAWARE | Species | OCEAN CITY | DELAWARE |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Bluefish | | May 11 Ronin Jehl Fenwick Beach 10 lbs 14 oz. | Weakfish | | January 8 Jim Hitchens Roosevelt Inlet 2.4 lbs. |
| Black Drum | | May 8 Billy Mister Delaware Bay 64 lbs. | Bigeye Tuna | | |
| Cobia | | | Bluefin Tuna | January 1 Kenny Schoen Hambone 442 lbs. | |
| Flounder | | ★ <small>New</small> May 17 Isaac Mitchell Lewes and RB Canal 4.34 lbs. | Longfin Tuna | | |
| Sea Bass | | | Yellowfin Tuna | | |
| Sheepshead | | | Dolphin | | |
| Striped Bass | | | Swordfish | | |
| Tautog | March 28 Kevin Twilley Ocean Structure 16 lbs. | ★ <small>New</small> May 17 Eamonn Carey Indian River Inlet 17 lbs. | Blue Marlin | | |
| Wahoo | | | White Marlin | | |

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



Erik Dowell displaying his 17" keeper flounder against the back drop of Ocean City. Erik was casting from Stinky Beach using a bucktail with a gulp teaser. It can also be assumed from the picture that Erik's favorite color may be red.



Experienced angler Brody Candeloro using the classic tactic of holding the fish closer to the camera. Despite fishing photo trickery this is a great fish and we are sure Brody is proud. This blue fish was caught in the East Channel just off of 5th street using minnows.

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Kevin McNelis with a boat name fitting the fish he was catching. This was Kevin's first trip and the year and ended up catching 34 fish within his three hours of being out. Sounds like a great first trip.



Ron Fritz holding his seemingly very every heavy black drum on the north beach of Ocean City. Ron was casting into the surf with sand fleas and Fishbites.

2025 MARYLAND REGULATIONS

STATE WATERS ONLY

| | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  BLACK SEA BASS 13" minimum / 15 per person/day May 15 - September 30 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 43" minimum 1 per person/day 6/15 - 9/20 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 12" minimum |  SPECKLED TROUT 14" minimum 4 per person/day |
|  STRIPED BASS 28-31" Less than 3 miles from shore 1 per person/day |  SUMMER FLOUNDER 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 2 per person/day 7/1 - 10/31 4 per person/day 11/1 - 12/31 |  WEAKFISH 13" minimum 1 per person/day |

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Jesse Harrah with wife Ashley, and kids Zoey and Zeke after their successful surf fishing trip on Assateague. The family caught this 28½ " black drum using Fishbites and sand fleas on a high low rig. The Harrahs were fishing with Fish Assateague LLC. By the look on Zeke's face it's safe to say that he wants that fish for dinner.

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Angler Steven Cropper, of Willards, MD, boated this nice 42" 50 lbs. black drum. Cropper was fishing the Nanticoke River. This black drum had a taste for peeler crabs when Steven hooked it up.



Adrian Dandridge Sr. is overjoyed with his 41" blue fish catch. He was fishing with his son also named Adrian on the Jetty using a 2 oz. Kastig Spoon.

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DELAWARE

FISHING REPORT

by Capt. BJ Pietryak



This week in Delaware brought us warmer weather and the much anticipated start of the spring sea bass season. The Lewes Harbour Marina Flounder Tournament was also held on Friday. The surf fishing, as well as Delaware Bay, is still producing big black drum along with over slot Stripers.

Nearshore Coral and Reefs

Sea bass season is finally here! Opening day brought some early morning fog as well as sloppy sea conditions causing many to delay their season's start. For those who did venture out, it was a mix of catches with some anglers finding the fish hungry and

ready to strike any offering placed before them while others struggled to find even a few keepers to bring home. The hot spots seem to be the normal areas of the NJ/DE Reef as well as Site 11. Fresh clam and small bass jigs produced the best. Burt from "Hook'Em and Cook'Em Tackle" reported that the "Judy V" and "Captain Bob" head boats both had good trips with some anglers achieving limits of sea bass while others collected more than enough for dinner. The Lewes Harbour fleet of head boats had similar results with experienced anglers achieving limits and the rest catching a nice bag for dinner. "Skipjack

Sportfishing" reports they kicked off their season with a bang. Although it took a while to reach their spot they had a boat limit of 90 fish by 11:45 am. Many keeper fish came in two at a time. They then tried a few drifts for flounder, however were unable to connect with any. "Bad Wind Charters" started with a touchy ride out to the fishing grounds with fog and a nasty swell but in the end did manage a boat limit. The "Angler" had a slower pick than they would have liked, but did manage a nice bunch of keepers including a few flounder. Eamonn Carey said it was a special day for the Crazy Irishman when he caught his personal best 17 pound tog. He was fishing with Captain Jon Azoto on the "No Limit". The fish was caught and released using white leggers on the last drop of the last day of the season.

Back Bays and Inlets


The bays and inlets continue to produce better each day as the water warms. The flounder fishing in the Lewes Canal has been the best we have seen in years. Indian River is still producing several bluefish and stripers during the high tide times near the rock walls. Flounder in both Massey Ditch and the inlet continues to produce better than we have seen in several years. The Lewes Harbour Marina Flounder Tournament was held on Friday the 16th with its customary large turn out. Fish began to arrive at the weigh-in station just after the start with many anglers catching fish on

their first drifts. After many leaderboard changes throughout the day the final results were: Issac Mitchell in first place with a 4.34lb flounder, second place was Chad Mitchell with 4.01 lbs, and third place was captured by Luke Stum with 3.98 lbs. The kids division was taken by Landon Steele with a 2.82lb flounder. The women's division was won by Jody Whitby with a 3.60lb flounder. Congratulations to all the winners and to all that participated in this worthwhile tournament. Billy Mister caught a nice fluke in the canal using an aqua clear rig. Young Colton Zencak proudly showed off his two entries in the Lewes tournament weighing 1.57lbs and 1.55lbs. It would seem the kids made quite a good showing in the tournament. Jen Moyer caught a nice keeper on Friday weighing in at 1.2lbs. Kay Lynne Dubinski managed two nice keepers at 24 and 26 inches. Malcolm Cox Sr. got a nice flatfish from Massey Ditch. Cody Reeves and Nathan Steeley scooped up at least 20 flatties including their 8 fish limit of keepers. Jesse Brozesky was using a bucktail in the inlet when he hooked a nice over slot rockfish which he brought in and safely released. Rachel Hewitt ended her stressful day catching a 19 inch flounder. Now that's a great stress reliever. Young man Finley Cleveland landed a nice 19", 2.2 lb fluke while fishing a live minnow at IR Inlet.

Surf Fishing

Surf fishing remains good for black drum with several anglers catching their personal best. For many anglers these big ugly fish are a fish of a lifetime. Fresh





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clam is working very well but many anglers are having the best results using live sand fleas tipped with fish bites. Michael Sullivan reeled in a 24 inch black drum that he caught using sand fleas. Eddie Schaufert didn't have the best conditions for his day on the beach but did manage a 33 inch drum. TC Dean was with Bob Ebersole and 2 others fishing on the south beaches and took home 33 lbs of fillets. They also caught and released an over slot rockfish. Jack Cael had a great weekend catching a few black with the biggest measuring 47.5 inches.

Clams and Crabs

Clams are beginning to get closer to the surface of the sand and no longer require a deep raking to retrieve them. A 5 gallon bucket can be raked up in about one hour if you find the right spot. Holts Landing as well as the Rehoboth Bay along RT 1 were the prime spots this past week. Crabs remain a little slow, however the pots are full of between 25-30 crabs. The problem is many are young females that have not mated yet or undersized males leaving 4-5 keepers per pot. After the next shed the crabs should be of legal size and many will have completed the mating cycle. Bunker is still the best bait along with chicken necks and salted eels for traps. Ryan Busche crushed the crabs, hitting their limit in 4 hours. He reported that many times when he pulled his circle nets up they had 2 or 3 keepers in them. Many crabs were in the larger size also including a few jumbos. Great job guys.

Until next week...

Tight lines and fins up.



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Kevin Logue and Ron Hartman showing of their haul of flat fish, from the Assawoman Bay. The duo were using white gulp to attract this fistful of fish.



Resident Rt. 50 Bridge angler, Nick Lerman, hauled up another striper. Coming in at 29½" Nick found a fish right inside the slot. Lerman was using a 5" swim bait on an outgoing tide.

2025

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 12 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 5/15 - 11/14 3 per person (Recreational) 5 per person Uninspected (Charter) 7 per person Inspected (Charter)</p> |
|  <p>DOLPHIN No minimum Length Boat Limit 54 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> |

SHARKS

AUTHORIZED SPECIES

No Minimum Fork Length
Atlantic Sharpnose, Bonnethead

54" Minimum Fork Length
Atlantic Blacktip, Bull, Lemon, Nurse, Spinner, Tiger, Blue, Common Thresher, Porbeagle, Finetooth, Atlantic Blacknose

78" Minimum Fork Length
Great Hammerhead, Scalloped Hammerhead, Smooth Hammerhead

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.

PROHIBITED SHARKS

Atlantic Angel, Basking, Bigeye Sand Tiger, Bigeye Sixgill, Bignose, Caribbean Reef, Caribbean Sharpnose, Dusky, Galapagos, Longfin Mako, Narrowtooth, Night, Oceanic Whitetip, Sandbar, Sand Tiger, Sevengill, Shortfin Mako, Silky, Sixgill, Smalltail, Whale, White

Resources: eregulations.com & NOAA.gov



Anthony Wiker, of PA, boated these two doormats this past weekend in Lewes, DE. Wiker was fishing with his brother and in total they caught 25 keepers over 4 days. Anthony was using a plain hook 24" leader with a 3 way swivel and a 1 oz sinker. A great four days of fishing with plenty of fish for dinner.



Brian Reynolds showing off his 16" tog caught at the Jetty. Brian's trip wasn't limited to tautog though as he also caught a 20½" flounder, 33¾" blue fish, and a small rockfish. Brian covered most of the bases of the bay fish for this part of the season.

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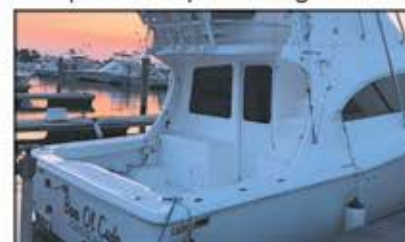
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Ship to Shore

STEVE'S MARINE SERVICE
by Steve Katz

If you spend time planning trips on the water, it is hard not to notice the increasing capabilities and relevance of smartphone and tablet applications in marine navigation. While it is easy for marine electronics professionals to see a disconnect between the robustness of a full suite of helm electronics and the perceived limitations of a

mobile app, it is becoming clearer that these apps offer significant value, particularly in unexpected situations.

My perspective on who relies on these apps recently shifted after hearing about Captain Alan Fields' experience. He was tasked with moving a used Viking from Florida to Maryland, and the boat's original navigation

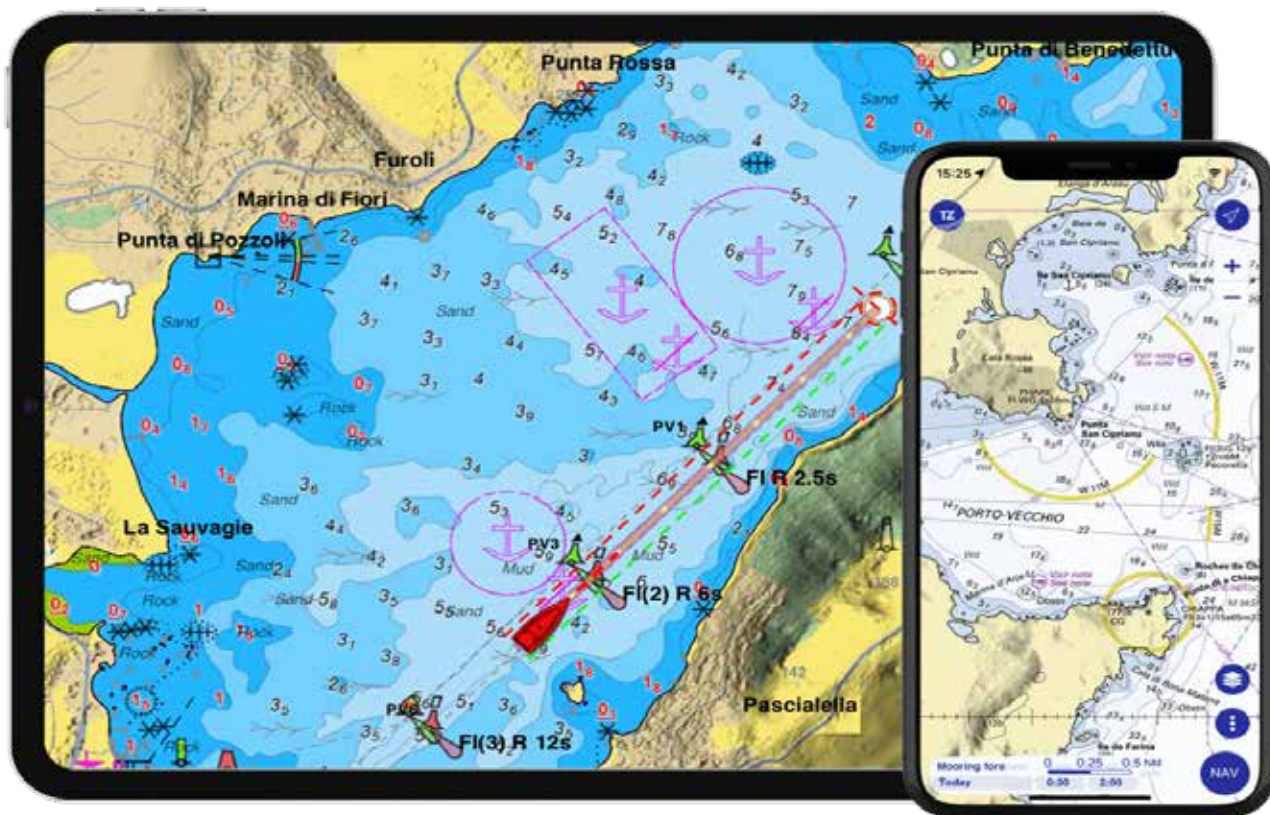
equipment was dated – the displays were faded, the system was slow, and updates were unavailable. To his surprise, Captain Fields found that the Navionics app on his phone was not only more user-friendly but also outperformed the boat's built-in electronics in terms of speed and up-to-date information. As a result, he depended on the app for the

majority of that thousand-mile voyage.

It is worth noting how far these applications have advanced in recent years. Many now offer seamless connectivity with onboard systems, providing integrated charting and the ability to easily share waypoints and other navigation data with other vessels directly through a smartphone.

An interesting trend I have observed is that some captains are now leveraging apps like Garmin Active Captain on their smartphones as a personal waypoint management system. This allows them to compile and store their preferred navigation points in a readily accessible format, which they can then utilize on any vessel they operate without the need for explicit data transfer.

For those who have not explored the newer generation of smartphone-based marine navigation apps, I highly recommend taking a look. The improvements have been substantial. Navionics, now part of Garmin, has integrated well with ActiveCaptain, and it can function effectively



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as a standalone navigation tool on a smartphone, even without a direct connection to a chartplotter. Another noteworthy option is TimeZero's TZ iBoat app, which might be of particular interest given the integration of TimeZero charts into the latest multi-function displays from Furuno. Of course, these are just two examples; there are numerous other reputable apps available, including Aqua Map, Argo, C-Map, Coastal

Explorer, i-Boating, iNavX, KnowWake, Navionics Boating, OpenCPN, Orca, Savvy Navvy, SEAIq, Sea Pilot, and Wavve Boating.

The majority of these popular smartphone navigation apps are quite affordable, typically costing less than \$100 annually, and this often includes chart updates. Some apps are even free and offer basic functionality using freely available NOAA charts.



Cobie Allen, Chase Burbage, and Nash Allen took advantage of the good flounder bite recently boating these 7 keepers. In total these three anglers caught 33 flounder in just two hours after they got out of school. Cobie Allen (orange sweatshirt) caught his first keeper coming in at 23”.

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THE GALLEY

Restaurant Style Sea Bass

Ingredients:

20-24 oz Chilean sea bass 4 fillets (5-6 oz each), skin-on works best

1.5 Tbsp butter

1.5 Tbsp olive oil or avocado oil

1/2 tsp salt or to taste

1/4 tsp black pepper or to taste

Lemon Sauce:

2 oz butter 1/4 cup, unsalted

2 Tbsp lemon juice from 1/2 large lemon

1/2 tsp salt

1/4 tsp black pepper

Directions:

Pat the sea bass fillets dry



with paper towels. Generously season both sides with salt and pepper.

Use a large skillet and heat 1.5 Tbsp of butter and 1.5 Tbsp of oil over medium-high heat.

Add the fillets skin-side-down and pan-sear for 3-4 minutes

per side. The cooking time depends on the thickness of the fillets.

When ready to flip, if the fillets stick, let them cook for 10-15 seconds more, and then try again.

The fish is ready when it flakes easily with a fork and has reached an internal temperature of 140-145°F.

To make the lemon sauce, melt 1/4 cup butter in a small saucepan over medium-low heat until lightly browned. Add the lemon juice, salt, and pepper and mix well.

When everything is ready, spoon the lemon butter sauce over the pan seared sea bass, serve, and enjoy!

1 green bell pepper, sliced

1/2 large red onion, sliced (about 1 cup)

10 medium flour tortillas



For the toppings:

Fresh avocado

Salsa

Fresh cilantro

Sour cream

Directions:

Make the salsa:

Char the serrano chiles in a cast iron skillet over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes per side, or grill over medium-high heat. Once cooked, cut the peppers in half and scoop out seeds. Then chop and stir into your favorite salsa along with lime and salt. It boosts the flavor and heat substantially!

Season the shrimp:

Mix up the spice mix of chili powder, kosher salt, black pepper, granulated onion, cumin, dried oregano, and optional red pepper flakes. Drizzle shrimp with 1 tablespoon of olive oil and toss with 2 tablespoons of spice mix. Stir well to combine and coat the shrimp.

Add the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil to the peppers and onions, and sprinkle the remaining spice mix over them. Stir to coat.

Cook the fajitas:

To cook the fajitas on the

Skillet Shrimp Fajitas

Ingredients:

For the Charred Serrano Salsa:

2 serrano chiles

1/2 cup medium red salsa, store-bought or homemade

1/2 lime, juice only

Pinch kosher salt

For the Spice Mix:

2 teaspoons mild chili powder

1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon granulated onion

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1 teaspoon red pepper flakes, optional

For the Fajitas:

1 pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined (31/35 size)

2 tablespoons olive oil, divided

1 red bell pepper, sliced

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stovetop, heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. If you're grilling the fajitas, heat your grill to medium-high heat along with a grill pan.

Once hot, add veggies to the skillet or grill pan and cook for 5 to 6 minutes until vegetables soften and start to char in spots. Scoot the veggies to one side of the pan and add shrimp. Cook shrimp for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring regularly until they are cooked through. They will cook fast!

Serve the fajitas:

Smear the flour tortillas with some sour cream. Divide veggies and shrimp between tortillas (I like to serve 3 to 4 shrimp per tortilla). You can remove the tails prior to serving, or let each person remove their own tails. Top the fajitas with avocado, salsa, fresh cilantro and/or sour cream.

Leftover fajitas filling will keep okay in the fridge for a day or two. I prefer to reheat in a skillet over medium-low heat until warmed through. I don't recommend microwaving shrimp unless you want your microwave to forever smell like shrimp.

Flounder Meunière

Ingredients:

4 nice sized fillets of flounder



4-6 oz each

Salt and pepper to taste

3 tablespoons olive oil

All purpose flour for dredging

About 1 cup

6 tablespoons salted butter

1 sprig fresh thyme optional

1 lemon plus more wedges for serving

2 tablespoons finely minced fresh parsley

Directions:

Pat the fish fillets dry with paper towels, then season both sides with salt and pepper. Pour enough olive oil to generously coat the bottom of a medium-large saute pan and place over high heat.

Working with one fillet at a time, lightly dredge in flour and shake off any excess, then gently lay it into the hot oil. Let it cook for about 2 minutes, or until the edges start to turn opaque. Use a fish spatula to carefully flip it over, and allow it to cook for another minute or two on the other side (time will depend on the thickness of your fillets). Repeat with the remaining fish.

Pour out the oil, wipe out the pan and lower the heat to medium. Add in the butter and let it cook until it starts to turn golden brown and smells nutty, about 4 minutes. Toss in the thyme sprig (if using) and stand back because it will spit and spatter. Then turn off the heat and quickly squeeze in lemon juice and shake the pan around to incorporate.

Place one fillet on each plate and pour the butter sauce over top. Sprinkle with parsley and serve immediately with more lemon wedges on the side.

Ultimate Striped Bass

Ingredients:

2 shallots, minced

1 red bell pepper, diced small

12 ounces mixed cherry



tomatoes, halved (quarter any obnoxiously large ones)

2 garlic cloves, minced

1/4 cup capers

1/2 cup dry white wine

1/2 cup (120 ml) low-sodium vegetable, chicken or fish stock

A few thyme sprigs

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1 teaspoon fine sea salt, divided

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided

4 6-8 oz. striped bass fillets, skin and bones removed

2 tablespoons butter, diced

1/2 cup julienned basil leaves

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400°F with a rack in the center.

Into a large, heavy pan with a lid (such as this one or this one), place the shallots, bell pepper, tomatoes, garlic, capers, wine, stock, thyme, half the salt, and half the pepper. Give it a stir.

Bake, covered, for 20 minutes.

Pat striped bass fillets dry with paper towels.

Carefully remove pan from oven and arrange fillets in pan on top of sauce, nestling them in a bit. Sprinkle fish with remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt and dot with butter.

Return pan to oven, uncovered. Bake until fish is just cooked through, about 15 to 20 minutes depending on thickness. Sprinkle with the basil.

To serve, place about a cup of orzo into each of four wide, shallow bowls and top each with a piece of fish. Spoon some veggies and plenty of sauce otop.

Fool Proof Bluefish

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons lemon juice

Zest of 1 lemon

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

1/2 teaspoon sea salt

1 garlic clove minced

1/2 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves from 2 sprigs or 1/4 teaspoon dried

2 pounds bluefish fillets see



note

1/4 cup mixed chopped fresh herbs chives, basil, parsley

Directions:

Combine the olive oil, lemon juice, lemon zest, mustard, salt, garlic and thyme in a large mixing bowl and whisk

until smooth.

Place the bluefish fillet in the bowl with the marinade or transfer both to a ziplock bag. Swish the bluefish fillets around until fully coated. Allow the bluefish to marinate at room temperature for 15 minutes while you prepare the grill.

Light up your grill and oil the rack – or place an indoor grill pan over medium-high heat.

Place the fish flesh-side down close to the heat source. Grill for 3 to 5 minutes per side, depending on the thickness of the fish. If less than 1-inch thick, aim for less than 8 minutes total time. If grilling a whole fish, you will likely need closer to 10 to 15 minutes total. You will be able to tell when the fish is done as it will begin to come apart at the seams and flake. Transfer the fish to a platter or plate and garnish with extra lemon wedges, if desired, and the herbs.

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Rick Stutzer fished just south of the Rt. 50 Bridge and caught four blue fish on his trip. Rick said he tried several baits but the Roy Rig was the only thing the fish wanted.

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Capt. Will Poole took his grandmother and grandfather out flounder fishing along with his girlfriend. The boat the “Local Hooker” caught its limit of 16 flounder. A great day for the family on a boat with a not so family oriented name.



Michael Sullivan standing on the beach of the Delaware Bay with his 24” black drum. Michael’s bait of choice were sand fleas to attract this nice sized fish.

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| | MD | DE ** | VA | | MD | DE ** | VA | | |
| Atlantic Spadefish | 24" | - | 22" or 8 lbs. | 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* | 54" | 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 | Any Size | 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" | 46" | Bigeye*** | 60" | 70 lbs. or 48" | 70 lbs. | | |
| Sailfish* | Any Size | - | 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

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Camryn Baeder was close to the first to the first sea bass of the season, boating her catch at 10 a.m. opening day. Camryn's catch came in at 16½". While the fish didn't end up being the first it's still a great fish none the less.



Bob 'Big Bass' Purcell of Bishopville, MD, holding up half of his nickname with this big red drum. Big Bass was fishing with Brad Foxwell of Chesapeake Fishing Adventures, south of Quinby, VA. Big Bass casted with a 2 oz. Jigged Up Unlimited Jig and 6" paddle tails. He said they were targeting bull red drum and we would say they found their target.

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Roy Fisher and his father Brian, of Middletown, PA, living up to their namesake with their lot of sea bass. The father son duo fished the first two days of sea bass season with Capt. Victor Bunting and mate Jeff Nottingham aboard the "Ocean Princess" out of Talbot Street. Some boats didn't report the strongest start to the sea bass season but judging from this picture the "Ocean Princess" had a pretty good start to the season.



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Capt. Paul Menzi
Ocean City, MD



“It was a tough tournament weatherwise. We used both current and wave direction and recommended fishing areas to determine where we'd fish all three days of the tournament. On the second day, we hooked this winner around noon. Thanks again to SiriusXM Marine and Fish Mapping.”

Capt. Paul Menzi, Winner of the 2024 White Marlin Open Tournament



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Photo credit: Paul Menzi.

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2025

Fish of the Year

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

| Species | 2025 | 2024 | Species | 2025 | 2024 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bluefish  | April 9 Mike Powers Fenwick State Park | April 19 Aiden Sparano Assateague | Weakfish  | May 8 Jim Hitchens Roosevelt Inlet | May 2 Jim Hitchens Delaware Bay |
| Black Drum  | April 6 Chris Taylor Assateague | March 31 Chris Taylor Assateague | Bigeye Tuna  | | May 31 Tyler Lanza "Canyon Crew" S. of Poor Mans Canyon |
| Cobia  | | June 1 Chuck Guerra OC Beach | Bluefin Tuna  | January 1 Kenny Schoen "Chasin' Tides" Hambone | May 31 Andrew Link "Marli" Poor Mans Canyon |
| Flounder  | April 4 Rick Gorsuch Thorofare | April 8 Paul Musser Jr. Thorofare | Longfin Tuna  | | June 18 Mark Steiner "Don't Ask" Baltimore Canyon |
| Sea Bass  | May 15 Mike Depalma "Bet Sea Sport Fishing" | May 17 Bob Houser Ocean Structure | Yellowfin Tuna  | | May 18 Chris Mentlik "Full Service" Washington Canyon |
| Sheepshead  | May 8 Brian Brannan Thorofare | May 7 Joe McNeal Ocean Structure | Dolphin  | | May 28 Finbar Rishko Baltimore Canyon |
| Striped Bass  | January 29 Richard Harpel Indian River Bay | January 3 Brian Reynolds Rt. 90 Bridge | Swordfish  | | June 1 Bobby West "Relentless" Poor Mans Canyon |
| Tautog  | January 6 Anthony Emerick "Chasin' Tides" Great Eastern | January 8 Anthony Emerick Ocean Structure | Blue Marlin  | | June 12 Tom Healy "Elizabeth Ann" Poor Mans Canyon |
| Wahoo  | | June 17 Greg Stansky Poor Mans Canyon | White Marlin  | | June 1 Jake Emche "Fish On" E. of Baltimore Canyon |

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



Capt. C.L. Marshall of Tangier Sound Charters had a good trip recently catching this nice red drum after realizing that the black drum were not around. The crew ended up catching two more drum and a “big Virginia rock.”



Danny ‘Fish Whisperer’ Cox went out last weekend with his brother-in-law Don Smallwood from McCormack, SC. Don caught both of these flounder coming in at 20½” and 2 lbs. 13 oz. and 19” 2 lbs. 1 oz. meaning he might have to take the name ‘Fish Whisperer’. The two were fishing outside the Jetty using Minnows.



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TOURNAMENT SERIES

— 2025 SCHEDULE —

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UPCOMING TOURNAMENT!

46th ANNUAL SMALL BOAT TOURNAMENT
Registration: June 20, 6:30-8:00pm
Fishing Days: (1 of 2) June 21 & 22
Weigh-Ins: June 21 & 22, 3:00-6:30pm at Sunset Marina

43rd ANNUAL CANYON KICK OFF *
Registration: July 3, 6:30-8:00pm
FREE TO PAID OCMC BOAT MEMBERS
Fishing Days: (2 of 3) July 4, 5 & 6
Weigh-Ins: July 4, 5 & 6
5:00-7:30pm at Sunset Marina

21st ANNUAL KID'S CLASSIC *
To benefit the Wish-A-Fish Foundation
Registration: July 18, 6:00-8:00pm
Fishing Days: (1 or 2 of 2) July 19 & 20
Weigh-Ins: July 19, 3:00-6:30pm and July 20, 3:00-6:00pm at Sunset Marina

17th ANNUAL FRANKY PETTOLINA "HEELS & REELS" TOURNAMENT *
To benefit the Marlin Club Crew of OC Scholarship Fund
Registration: July 31, 6:00-8:00pm
Fishing Days: (1 of 2) August 1 & 2
Weigh-Ins: August 1 & 2
5:30-7:30pm at Fisherman's Marina

2ND ANNUAL LABOR DAY INVITATIONAL
Registration: August 28, 6:30 - 8:00pm
Fishing Days: (1 of 3) August 29, 30 & 31
NO WEIGH-INS:
This is strictly a release tournament.
Release reports MUST be turned in to OCMC Clubhouse on your fishing day BY 8:00PM

45th ANNUAL CHARLES KRATZ & SCOTT SMITH CHALLENGE CUP
Registration: Sept. 10, 6:00-8:00pm
Fishing Days: (2 of 3) Sept. 11, 12 & 13
NO WEIGH-INS
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Check for Updates on our WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

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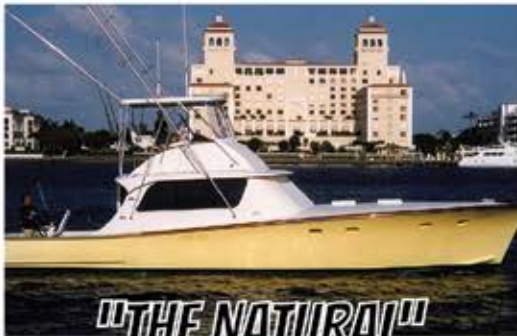


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Angler Eamonn Carey caught his personal best tautog and according to our records the heaviest caught in MD or DE this year. Eamonn's tog weighed in at 17 lbs. and was caught on the "No Limit" with Capt. Jon Azoto in the Indian River Inlet. Eamonn released this fish and was using White Legger Crab.















Expert surf fisherman David Moore with a 39" black drum he caught while fishing with Russel Lederman. David caught another black drum that he reported he did realize he had on the line until as he was leaving and bringing his rod in.

2025

DELAWARE REGULATIONS

STATE WATERS ONLY

| | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>BLACK SEA BASS 13" minimum / 15 per person/day May 15 - September 30 October 10 - December 31</p> |  <p>BLUEFISH No minimum size 3 per day / 5 per day Charter</p> |  <p>BLACK DRUM 16" minimum 3 per person/day</p> |  <p>COBIA 43" Minimum • 2 per person or 2 per vessel</p> |
|  <p>CROAKER 8" Minimum • 50 per person/per day</p> |  <p>RED DRUM 20-27" minimum 5 per person/day</p> |  <p>SHEEPSHEAD No limit</p> |  <p>SPECKLED TROUT 12" minimum No creel limit</p> |
|  <p>STRIPED BASS 28-31" except 20-25" only from 7/1 - 8/31 in DE Bay 1 per person/day Catch & Release only from 4/1 - 5/31 on Spawning Grounds</p> |  <p>SUMMER FLOUNDER 4 per person/day 1/1 - 5/31 - 16" 6/1 - 12/31 - 17.5"</p> |  <p>TAUTOG 16" minimum 4 per person/day 1/1 - 5/15 4 per person/day 7/1 - 12/31</p> |  <p>WEAKFISH 13" minimum 1 per person/day</p> |

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Capt. Mason Newsham of the "Crab Burner" brought Josh and Tiffany on charter trip with boat catching five good sized black drum. The three were fishing in the Delaware Bay for these good looking fish. Pictured at Lewis Harbour Marina.



Angler J.R. Griffith from Milford, DE holding one of four fish that he caught at Cape Henlopen State Park. J.R. caught this 30" keeper rockfish using blood worms. J.R. also caught another stripped bass at 27¾", and two black drum at 26" and 25".

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OCEAN CITY INLET
TIDES & MOON PHASES

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| WED. MAY 21 | High 02:59 am High 3:35 pm | Low 09:10 am Low 09:32 pm |
| THUR. MAY 22 | High 03:57 am High 04:35 pm | Low 10:01 am Low 10:40 pm |
| FRI. MAY 23 | High 04:52 am High 05:31 pm | Low 10:54 am Low 11:45 pm |
| SAT. MAY 24 | High 05:46 am High 06:26 pm | Low 11:47 am Low ----- |
| SUN. MAY 25 | High 06:39 am High 07:21 pm | Low 12:45 am Low 12:38 pm |
| MON. MAY 26 New Moon | High 07:34 am High 08:18 pm | Low 01:42 am Low 01:29 pm |
| TUE. MAY 27 | High 08:29 am High 09:15 pm | Low 02:35 am Low 02:19 pm |
| WED. MAY 28 | High 09:24 am High 10:11 pm | Low 03:28 am Low 03:10 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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Fisherman Lamont Hilbert showing off two of his three keepers from his trip to the Ocean City Inlet. Lamont was aboard the "Sea Bum" and caught eight fluke in total with the largest measuring up to 18". He was using gulp for this particular trip.

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Chum Lines

by Capt. Mark Sampson



After a gazillion or so years of working as a fishing guide I've witnessed more than just a few last minute goof-ups on behalf of the angler that ended up with a fish prematurely departing company on its own terms. As fishermen we all know that until we have it in the boat, the net, on the pier, or to the bank, from the moment a fish is hooked there's a lot that can happen to prevent a "bite" from officially becoming a "catch".

Yeah, every angler learns early-on that "losing fish" is as much a part of fishing as "catching fish"! And while I have no hard evidence to prove it, I'm going to guess that after they've been hooked, more fish are lost at

the end of the struggle than the beginning or middle of the bout between catch and the catcher. So here's a handful of suggestions on how to avoid a few of the more common mistakes I've witnessed.

Don't lift the fish out of the water with the rod.

While it's common practice for anglers to land small fish by simply lifting the rod and swinging them up out of the water and into the boat or onto the pier or bank, this technique is almost always going to prove disastrous if the fish is relatively large or barely hooked. And remember that a fish isn't officially "boated" until it's "in" the boat, so if you do

chose to lift it out of the water with the rod make sure you swing it into the boat right away so if it falls off the hook it will at least land on your side of the gunwale!

Keep a little distance between rod tip and fish.

Too many times I've seen fish lost simply because over-excited anglers crank a fish within one or two feet of the rod tip. As a rule of thumb, a fish should not be brought any closer to the rod tip than the rod is long. That distance allows the angler the opportunity to maneuver the fish close to hand or net by pointing the rod up and easily reaching out and grabbing the leader or line.

Don't crank down the drag.

Anglers who have never caught a fish that's big or strong enough to actually pull drag off a reel often make the mistake of freaking out and cranking down the drag when they finally hook one that's able to give them a serious run for their money. The drag should be properly set at a tension appropriate for the line and the fish expected to be hooked. After that it shouldn't be touched unless the angler really knows what they're doing and is very familiar with their tackle. Drags are designed so that no matter how hard a fish pulls the line won't break and the hook won't straighten and tampering with it in the middle of a fight is flirting with disaster.

Have a net, gaff or whatever ready before fish arrives.

Preparation is the key to success when landing a fish. Nets, gaffs, gloves, rags, pliers and anything

else needed to land a catch should be out and ready for use long before the fish is at hand. Things can get hectic when a big fish is close, don't allow it to be worse by not being ready to close the deal at the first chance.

Pay attention to where the hook is located.

It doesn't matter if it's a minnow or a monster, as soon as a fish is brought in close the first thing the angler should do is look to see how well it's hooked. If the hook appears firmly embedded in the jaw - that's great, carry on with the landing process. But if the hook appeared to be just barely hanging on to a thin bit of skin on the outside of the mouth there will likely be a need to hurry things up before the hook pulls free on its own as well as an increased need to be gentle on the line and leader to avoid adding pressure that will make the hook pop. Smaller fish that are usually just lifted out of the water by the line or leader might need to be netted if they're lip-hooked.

Know the breaking strength of the leader and hook.

When a fish is brought in close the next step in the landing process is usually for the angler or a fishing partner to grab the line or leader and either lift the fish directly onto the boat or pier, to direct it to the net or gaff, or sometimes just to hold it alongside the boat for a photo or two before release. Since this stage of the landing process usually involves adding a lot more pull on the terminal tackle than has been applied by the drag from the reel, it's important for anglers to have a good understanding of the breaking strength of the leader, the swivels, the knots, and the hook. Knots can fail, swivels break, leaders pop, and hooks can straighten if

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they're pushed beyond their limit and a big fish surging away from a boat at the last minute can do just that. When to hold tight and when to let go of the leader is all about the strength of the weakest link in what you're holding on to.

Dip the rod when the fish surges.

Very often, the first time or two a fish is brought in close it will spook and make a quick departure from the boat in a last blast of energy. This sudden acceleration can sometimes be enough to part light a line or pull a hook that's not solidly embedded in the fish. A simple way to help prevent such an outcome is to quickly dip the rod-tip towards the fish as it takes off thus giving the drag washers a chance to start slipping a little more gradually and making it less likely the sudden snatch will turn a proud moment into last moment disappointment.



The "Elizabeth Ann" out of the Indian River Marina caught some other early blue fins. Jim Bunting, Dylan Wiley, Thomas Healy, and one unnamed angler caught 10 out of 11 blues and had such a good morning that they were heading back to the marina by noon. It's good to see both MD and DE boats getting the blue fins this early.



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Bill Powell, son of 'Fish' Powell, releasing his 47" red drum in this amazing shot. Bill Powell was fishing with Allen Sklar on Assateague Island for black drum. The two were happily surprised when this drum came onto the shore. The two were using sand fleas as bait and Allen also caught a 42" red drum.

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The three victors of The Lewes Harbor Marina Canal Flounder Tournament 2025. These three gentlemen Isaac Mitchell, Chad Mitchell, and Luke Stum (pictured left to right) took home the prize money for the tournament held last weekend. Isaac Mitchell, the first place angler, had a flounder coming in at 4.34 lbs. earning him \$6000 and the current holder of largest flounder caught in Delaware this year. Chad Mitchell brought in the second place flounder weighing in at 4.01 lbs netting him \$2500, and Luke Stum with the bronze flounder weighing 3.98 lbs. awarding him \$1500. Congratulations to all the winners and participants in this great tournament.

LEWES HARBOR MARINA CANAL FLOUNDER TOURNAMENT
Tournament Results ---- MAY 17th, 2025

Men's Division

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1st Place - ISSAC MITCHELL | 4.34 lbs. |
| 2nd Place - Chad Mitchell | 4.01 lbs. |
| 3rd Place - Luke Stum | 3.98 lbs. |

Women's Division

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1st Place - JODY WHITBY | 3.60 lbs. |
| 2nd Place - Kristen Burtell | 1.87 lbs. |
| 3rd Place - Christina Santiago | 3.26 lbs. |

Kids Division

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1st Place - LONDON STEELE | 2.82 lbs. |
| 2nd Place - Brodey Keller | 1.80 lbs. |

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Lady angler, Jody Whitby, with her 3.60 lbs. flounder. Jody claimed the top prize of the Women's Division. Lady anglers Christina Santiago and Kirsten Burtell placed in 2nd and 3rd place with a 3.26 lbs. and 1.87 lbs fluke respectively.



Landon Steele holding his 2.82 lbs. flounder that put him in the first place position of the Kid's Division. This fish earned Landon a new rod that he surely will use to catch more tournament winning flounder.



2nd place winner of the Kid's Division, Brodey Keller, showing off his 1.80 lbs. flat fish. Coming in at second place Brodey was awarded a new tackle box. Good job to all the junior anglers who participated in the tournament.








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VIRGINIA

FISHING REPORT

by Capt. Matt Abell



Sometimes you have to stop and think how lucky we are to have the opportunities given to pursue our passion. As time and tide flow, more rod bending quarry swim into the pristine waters of the Eastern Shore. With the start to rock and sea bass seasons, many anglers are excited to indulge in what was previously, forbidden fruit. From the Chesapeake to the Atlantic, these waters are providing plenty of pull-age for the southern shore.

The surf continues to roll in with rock, black and red drum. The bait of choice is a mix of peeler chucks and sand fleas offered on modified fishfinder rigs with 6/0-8/0 rock ready non-offset circle hooks. Keep in mind the slot for rock is pretty slim with a 28"-31" size

limit. Along with these sizable surf trophies, some bluefish and kingfish are starting to appear, adding to the variety available on the ESVA sands.

The flounder action, while still strong, has gotten a bit slower... or actually smaller. Numbers of undersized fish increased this week in relation to keepers. No worries though, there are still plenty of doormats to decorate the dinner table. Pink and white teasers have been pretty productive when tipped with a silverside or big bull minnow. Both tides have been productive with the best action coming on the flats of the ESVA in clear water.

The middle Chesapeake has been hot with good catches of black drum on the oyster

rocks of the Pocomoke sound and reds, rock and a few specs lurking on the edges of the many grassy flats in search of a softcrab dinner. It's legal to take rock now in the Chesapeake as-well as the Pocomoke and Tangier Sounds, but keep in mind the mandatory use of non-offset circles, 1 fish bag limit and 19"- 24" slot size restriction. In addition to the big bayside brawlers, some nice blues have shown up and eagerly come to play. These aerial acrobats have eagerly pursued a variety of artificial baits including Rap-10's and topwater spook style baits. My good buddy Capt CL Marshall had a client who kept his fly rod bent on bullish blues and the captain busy with what is probably the most underrated sport fish around.

The nearshore Atlantic was the seen of an onslaught of seabassers, as anglers took to the big blue to engage in excellent fishing that leads to exquisite cuisine. Anglers rigged up in search of their limit of 15 fish (not to be less than 13") and came back to the dock smiling and craving delicious fillets that we have been waiting for all spring.













The CBBT has had some great sheepshead and black drum fishing around the pilings. The sheepshead bite is early and plentiful. Hopefully these striped crab eaters will make their way up the bay as the year progresses.

With all these options and so little time, make sure that you don't miss the chance at a memory with your friends or family. We are truly blessed to have these opportunities and especially blessed to enjoy this wonderful place that we call home !!!!!

2025

VIRGINIA REGULATIONS

STATE WATERS ONLY

| | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>BLACK SEA BASS 13" minimum / 15 per person/day May 15 - July 15 August 4 - 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 43" minimum / Only 1>50" 1 per person/day • 2 per boat/day 6/15 - 9/20</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 4 per person/day All Year 1/1 - 5/31 - 16" 6/1 - 12/31 - 17.5"</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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Tyler Clazy and crew holding up their three sizable red drum. The team was fishing with Thomason Tradition Sport Fishing out of Cape Charles, VA. Tyler reported that they caught their fish just as weather was getting worse and along with it the waves.



Larry Avara, from Huntvalley, MD, proudly displaying his big black drum caught surf fishing on Chincoteague Island. Larry was using high low rig with sand fleas and Fishbites.

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5 YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY applies to qualifying purchases of Suzuki outboard motors sold and delivered to the retail purchaser, for pleasure (non-commercial) use only, from April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2026. See Suzuki Limited Warranty for additional details. Suzuki, the "S" logo, and Suzuki model and product names are Suzuki Trademarks or ®. © 2025 Suzuki Marine USA, LLC. All rights reserved.

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