

Priceless

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COASTAL FISHERMAN

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It was an early December to remember on the shoals and shallows offshore as big schools of bluefin tuna swarmed. Lots of big fish made their way to the docks including this one that Capt. Croft Upchurch reeled in while trolling just offshore of the Isle of Wight Shoal. He was fishing on a private 46' Sea Hunt when this 66" blue hit on a nomad diving plug in ~60 feet of water.



John Russell claimed the title for the Heaviest Flounder in MD for 2024 with this monster 12.5 lb. and 33.5" long flatfish! This one is now his personal best beating the last one by 2 lbs. He fooled this one at an ocean structure using a Tsunami Ball with a fresh bluefish strip.



Young Mason and Myles Halsey with Logan B. had a good day in late September in the eastern Chesapeake Bay. They were trolling umbrellas on the "Party of Six" with Chesapeake Medical's Mike Halsey and Steve Rhodes, Jeff Keubel and Jerry Judge.

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Fall fishing was helped by warm weather and calm seas. Many anglers got out on headboats crushing both flounder and sea bass. Gene Hige of Dover, DE and Tina & Jason Cutsail of Westminster, MD took trips on the "Judith M" out of Bahia Marina with Gene on his flounder limit and the Cutsails keeping a nice mix of sea bass and flatfish.

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2023 DELMARVA Year in Review

by Capt. B.J. Pietryak, Capt. Matt Abell & Larry Budd



It was certainly an interesting year for fishing in 2023. Tournaments again saw record payouts; several state records were bested; the winds were relentless and the White Marlin Open paid out not only a tournament record prize, but the largest of any tournament worldwide.

All in all, the year saw a nice balance of fish caught with some species performing better than others. The year started with solid tog action. Offshore saw nice flounder and sea bass catches, inshore for flounder and bluefish. Notable for 2023 were the short lived yellowfin runs. In recent years when the bite got hot it could last for 4-5 days or a week. Last year saw runs measured in one or two days. White marlin were found in numbers greater than those of the past couple of years, but not matching the pre-pandemic seasons. Blue marlin put on quite a show in the early summer with captains reporting some of the

best action they had ever seen in our area. In the weaker category were weakfish and striped bass. The latter fits that moniker mainly due to the reduction in what size anglers could keep. Cobia rounded out the summer season with a nice mid October run for about 10 days, and it was a December to remember with a hot near shore bluefin tuna bite like the one on our cover.

There was so much to 2023, so let's spend a little time with a summary of each weeks Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and Offshore reports. Each weekly issue date is highlighted in bold.

May 3, 2023

Unlike 2022, the winter and spring saw mild temperatures and fewer storms. By our first issue nearshore and bay fishing was already snapping with a strong run of black drum. Angler Christina Puglisi was on our cover with a 28 lb. black drum she wrestled in from the surf at 3R's! The surf off

Assateague Island was also hot with big blacks hitting on sand fleas, Fishbites and clams. David Moore and Morgan Mericle landed 8 big ones in one outing. Early morning or late afternoon were reported to be most productive with the best tide being an incoming one right after slack tide. Big blacks and red drum were also being found in the Pocomoke and Tangier Sounds. Big drums were not the only big fish in the suds, some heavy stripers were also in the mix up and down the coast with several over 40" reported.

The back bays were already active as well. In Ocean City, anglers were reporting keeper flounder every day. The Delaware Bay was a little tougher. Alex Neiss still found them landing 4 from the VFW slough in mid April and a few days later he and his crew pulled in 9 keepers from Massey's Landing. The bays around the barrier islands on the ESVA also held keeper flatties in 3' - 12' depth range. These were good omens for sure.

The canyons remained seasonably cool with some reports of eddies in the 60's just outside of the Wilmington and Poor Man's Canyons. Readers also enjoyed some reports of fish caught by locals on their winter and early spring trips to Florida and South America.

May 10, 2023

Cooler air and wind moved in putting a chill on the bay flounder fishing with cold & dirty water, but seemingly it lit up the canyons! Tog fishing remained strong with big fish on the near shore reefs and wrecks as well as the Wall in the Delaware Bay. Smaller ones could be found off the Rt. 50 Bridge. Delaware saw some big

ones, including a new record. James Milano of North Babylon, NY set a new DE State Record for tog with a 22.9 pounder he caught using white crab legs at an ocean structure. He was fishing on the charter boat "No Limit" out of the Indian River Marina.

The striper bite remained solid with lots of 40"+ fish being found in the surf up and down the coast. The Chesapeake Bay Trophy Rock season also opened that week with lots of fat rocks hitting coolers. Striper anglers did receive some bad news however as DE, MD and VA began to lower the regulations limiting keepers to 28" to 31", a narrow band to be sure. Black drum also remained strong in the surf.

Sea bass season was still a few days away from opening and we were receiving reports of some nice fish being mixed in with the tog catch, a very good sign. Angler Anthony Carrieri reported the first sheepshead we heard of for the season from the Ocean City Jetty.

The 'reel' news of this week was the action offshore. We had expected to share when captains were planning to go out, instead we had several 'First Fish' reports. This included the first bigeye of the season caught by Jeff Rosenkilde on the "Full Service", a 95 lb. tuna that was on the cover. Owner Brendan Barbey saw a warm water eddy of about 60° forming in the Baltimore Canyon about 60 miles out in 300 fathoms. This one hit on a tried-and-true skirted cedar plug as they were setting the spread first thing in the morning. That was not the only eyeball that hit the scales that week. The crew on the "Pier Pressure" put a 113 lb. tuna on the scales at the Ocean City Fishing Center. Despite a very late start due to trailer problems, they ran out to the Poor Man's Canyon and hooked up just as the sun began to set. Another tuna species had its First Fish

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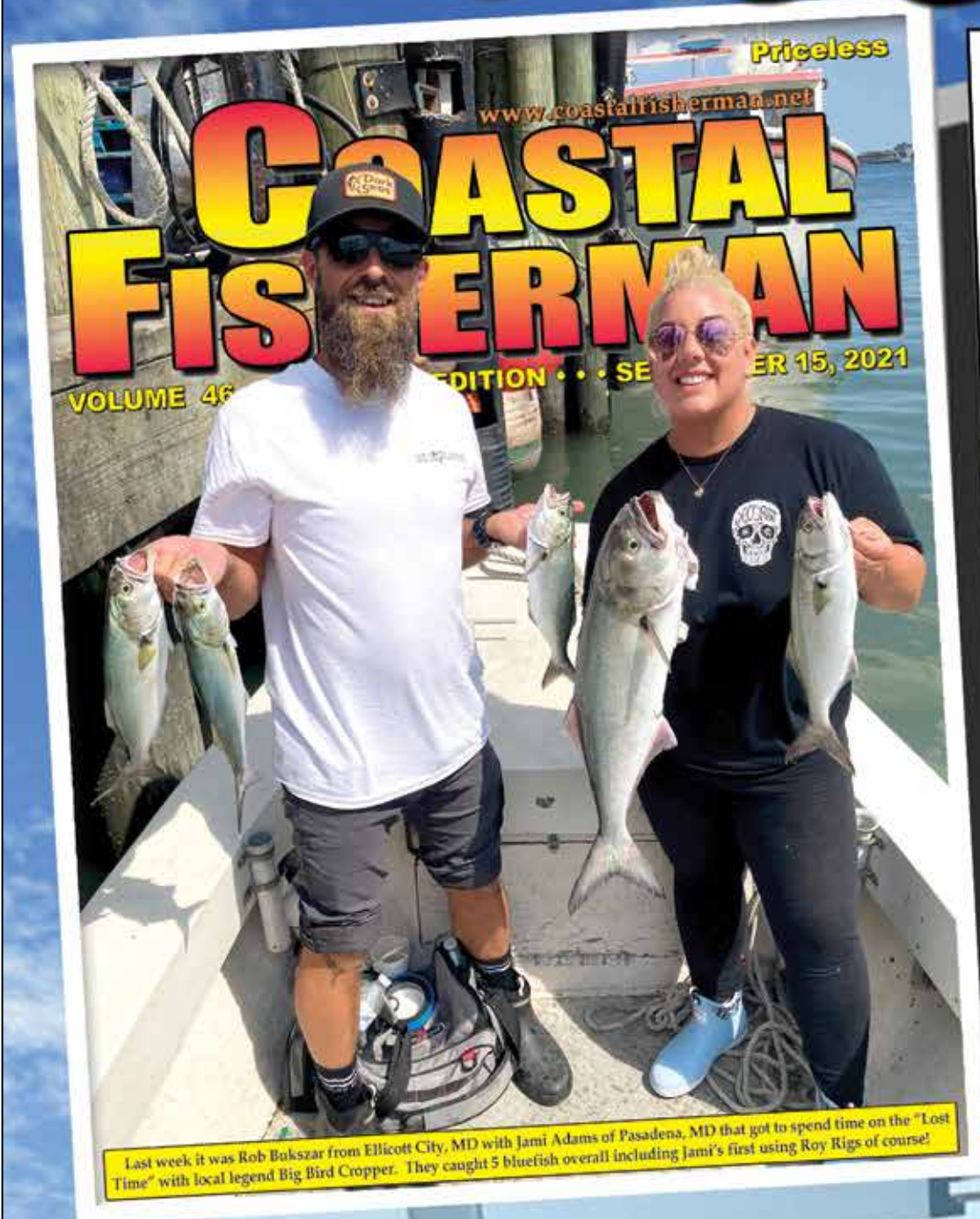
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catch of the season. The "Kilory" landed the first yellowfin for 2023. It was 36" and about 30 lbs. and found outside of the Poor Man's Canyon. It was their only bite for the day. And as if two pelagic first fish reports for the 2nd week of May were not enough, the crew on the charter boat "Talkin' Trash" landed the first mahi of the season. They were tile fishing and had 9 goldens in the box when they spotted a nice weed line and a couple mahi. Angler Brad Hubbard snagged one earning the First Fish title.

May 17, 2023

Opening day for sea bass season happened this week on Monday. It was not a strong opening day like in 2022 as the weather was sporty and it was a weekday. Still, many ventured out. One of the first to the docks was the "Bet Sea". They started at the Great Eastern Reef but did not have much luck. A short move 7 miles east to the Fingers changed that catching their 2 man limit of 30 in 21 fathoms. Angler Michael DiPalma, Sr. also snatched the title for sea bass First Fish! The Marine Electric was another popular spot and while not as many were caught, they seemed to be larger.

The striper and drum bite continued this week off the beach with some reds in the mix, while warming temps reinvigorated the flounder bite in the back bays. Anglers were still pulling in 40"+ rocks from up and down the shore as they migrated north. It was some of the best fishing seen in years. Tryan Stoltfus managed to catch a nice sized keeper rock just before the new limits went into effect. He was fishing near the bullpen on Assateague Island using sandfleas. Joe Pruitt caught a real trophy from the suds, a 50.5" striper using sand fleas and clam. Not many anglers can say they caught a rock over 50"s, let alone from the beach. Anglers on the ESVA were finding red & black drum off their western shore as well as specs. Soft peeler crabs & peelers did the trick.

For flounder in Maryland, the hot spots were the Inlet and adjoining channels. Deeper locations like by the airport and Thorofare were improving, but slower than ones closer to the Inlet. In Delaware anglers were preparing for the Joe Morris Memorial Lewes Canal Fishing Tournament and the canal did not disappoint with a mix of keepers and undersized fish being caught. Anglers at the Cape Henlopen Pier were also

finding good luck with keeper flounder.

The spring tog season closed on the 15th, but it finished strong. Several anglers reported heavy action at the near shore wrecks with many reports of fish in the double digits. The headboats "Angler" and the "Ocean City Girl" both reported great end of season tog trips with several double digit fish as well.

Deeper in the back bays anglers were finding bluefish and weakfish. Down by the Verrazano Bridge was the hot spot.

Offshore was a blow out for most of the week. The warmer water had also pushed east to 100 miles or more, so most captains did not venture out.

May 24, 2023

Memorial Day was upon us and Mother Nature gave us mostly 'sporty' days on the water, so the action was a little light; especially offshore. We got more reports on sea bass catches from the first few days of the season and a couple tournaments were held in the canal and sand.

Opening week for the sea bass season could only be called lackluster at best. Even the most seasoned anglers were finding the knotheads to be uncooperative and dealing with a lot of shorts. A few boats did manage their limits and most caught a couple keepers. A couple notables were the "Pole Dance" returning to the Indian River Marina with over 100 fish and the "Restless Lady II" brought in a 9 man limit of 135 fish to the cleaners at the Talbot Street Pier. Wayne Small caught a 21.5" and almost 6 lb. sea bass while fishing on the headboat "Morning Star". The Great Eastern Reef was again the spot to be.

Flounder were being caught broadly across the area. In Delaware the deeper inshore wrecks were producing larger fish. The Inlet and channels around the VFW were productive in the Delaware Bay. Shawn Hastings however did find a 22" and 2.5 lb. flattie in the Indian River Bay. Lewes Harbour Marina held the Joe Morris Memorial Lewes Canal Flounder Tournament and saw over 400 anglers enter to fish and raise money for cancer research. It was Monica Powell who took the top spot with a 4.93 lb. fattie besting the next closest fish by almost a pound. Closer to the Inlet remained the best place in Ocean City and some quality fish had moved north into the Thorofare. The high

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- Bay Bridge Boat Show April 12-14
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Andrew White of Harford County, MD got in on the very hot wahoo bite in mid October. He caught this 68" and 80 lb. speedster only 40 miles offshore on a BWC lure. Pictured at the Ocean City Fishing Center.

winds turned the water dirty on the ESVA putting a real hurt on flounder down there.

A few big rocks and drum were still in the surf, but fewer than the weeks before as the spring migration came to a close. There was still good action for drum at the CBBT. Ed Balcerzak made a trip south to the bridge/tunnel and caught a 12 drum on a slack tide including one at 35".

The bluefish bite was picking up and with larger fish, some in the mid to low teens. Some nice weakfish were caught in the Ocean City Bays including a 28" one caught by Andy Ralston that weighed 6.5 lbs. He was fishing the southern Ocean City Bay on the charter boat "Lucky Break". Old Inlet Bait & Tackle held their "Cast for a Cure" surf fishing tournament to raise money for cancer research. Team 'DMS' or Delaware Mobile Surf Fishing took top honors earning 120 points. The real winner was breast cancer research with \$10,000 raised.

May 31, 2023

Weather this week determine whether anglers were fishing or not! A strong and steady northeast wind ruled most of the week making near shore and offshore unmanageable for most of the days. Fishing in the

bays and inlets provided lots of opportunities for action and keepers. A very few braved the weather in the canyons and found some great catches.

Sea Bass fishing was very limited due to the weather. Headboats like the "Angler" and "Judith M" got out only a few times. Capt. Chris Mizurak on the "Angler" did comment that the quality and size of the knotheads was improving over those of opening week. Hook'em & Cook'em at the Indian River Marina reported a 4.5 lb. sea bass caught on a private boat setting a new Heaviest Fish for Delaware for the season to date.

Closer to shore anglers were still finding big black drum. The really huge ones were in the Delaware Bay, and lots of good-sized fish were still being pulled from the surf. The beach was also the place to be for rockfish, big rockfish, as was the Ocean City Jetty. We had many reports of fish over 40". With the regulations for keepers now at only 28" - 31", only a lucky few found their way into coolers.

Flounder were more active in the back bays, mainly in Maryland. The East & West Channels and the Thorofare were producing nice fish in the 16" - 19" range. Old Inlet Bait & Tackle starting

to see flatfish show up in back bays of Delaware. Shawn Hastings came in with two of the first for the season with the largest at 22" and 2.5 lbs. Cape Henlopen Pier was productive with anglers catching 2 or 3 keepers a piece. In DE though, the Lewes Canal was the place to go this week. Several nice fish were landed including the one Connor Lucey caught on a live minnow. He checked into Lewes Harbour Marina, and it tipped the scales at a heavy 4.95 lbs.

Bluefish were more in the mix as well being found in the suds, at the Indian River Inlet and around the Rt. 50 Bridge. The largest for the week was 11 lbs. from the bridge.

Several good sized weakfish were found in the bays behind Assateague Island and the Indian River Inlet. Steve Gurczenski showed up at Hook'em & Cook'em with a whopping 21" and 4.5 lb. weakie! Some sharks were being caught only a few miles offshore. A junior great white was released 4 - 5 miles out and a nice spinner shark was caught and released from the surf at Assateague.

Most captains were watching the weather and the surface temperature charts. The "Primary Search", known for fishing early in the season was one of those. They found a day where the weather was tolerable and headed out at 3:30AM so they could fish at first light. You have to love when a plan comes together because they hooked up right as they set lines in 250 fathoms of the Baltimore Canyon. At one point they had 10 lines tight and managed to return to Sunset Marina with 7 bigeye tuna in the box. Capt. Austin Ensor shared that there were yellowfin biting too, but he had no more cooler space!

June 7, 2023

The temps were unseasonably cool and the NE winds continued into a 3rd week! The much anticipated and rewarded first white marlin of the year was caught, the tuna action in the canyons was hot and a new offshore tournament launched. Closer to shore the sea bass were still finicky, and some ocean flounder found their way over the rails. Inshore the bay waters were warming helping the bite.

Larger, keeper sea bass were still further out with the Great Eastern and Jack Spot being the hot spots. Closer in the action was there, but most at places like the African Queen were undersized. Even at the deeper sites, anglers were averaging 10

keepers a trip. Capt. Rich Shoaff on the headboat "Judith M" reported most of their keepers were in the 1.5 lb. to 2 lb. range.

The Thorofare was still hot in Ocean City for flounder with several reports of limit catches. The DE bays were not yet active even though a few keepers made their way in, however the Lewes Canal continued to rule as the place to be. Live minnows and Gulp were best this week.

The drum and rock bite in the surf slowed as the waters warmed. Surf fishermen were finding spot now and smaller bluefish up and down the shore. The Bahia Marina held their Blues for DU Tournament with local Shaun Flaherty taking 1st place for a 12.1 lb. bluefish he caught off the south Ocean City Jetty.

The Tangier and Pocomoke Sounds held reds, specs and rocks in the grassy shallows and anglers at the CBBT were catching some of the first cobia of the season.

The canyons lit up with lots of tuna action, the afore mentioned first white marlin as well as the first blue marlin and several new Heaviest Fish including bigeye, bluefin, yellowfin and mahi! Capt. Chris Huk on the charter boat "Restless Lady II" were trolling for tuna on June 2nd on the west wall of the Baltimore Canyon when Chris saw the white charging the boat from 40 yards off the starboard quarter. It started bouncing between two spreader bars before it bit on a flat line, a unique way to land a marlin. Chris' dad Joe Huk was on the rod and made quick work of getting the fish to the boat as it ran straight in. It was estimated at 72" - 23" and 70 lbs. and earned Joe serious bragging rights for first white of the season. They also managed 7 yellowfins in the box.

The private boat "Kilo Charlie" broke from the pack and headed 72 miles north to the Wilmington Canyon. They were rewarded with a limit catch of 18 yellowfins. The "Full Service" was not to be outdone returning to Sunset Marina with 23 yellowfins in the box, one short of their limit. They headed south to the tip of the Washington Canyon in 100 fathoms and had tight lines from the moment they put lines in. Cedar plugs with a skirt did the trick all day!

The first Battle for the Buckle was held with sponsor Pure Lure's Brendan Hanley taking top honors for heaviest tuna with a 164 lb. bigeye caught just north of the Baltimore Canyon. The Heaviest Stringer came

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Shaun Hockstad got to share a couple firsts last September on his boat the "Nauti Norwegian". Both his 8 year old son Kennedy and 6 year old daughter Eleanor caught and released their first white marlins, starting a 3rd generation of the "Nauti Norwegian". Pictured is the one Eleanor caught in the Washington Canyon.

from the charter boat "Game Changer" with 5 yellowfin with a combined weight of 172.5 lbs.

June 14, 2023

The weather was mixed as the week started beautifully with low winds, but by week's end smoke from Canadian wildfires permeated the air creating a dystopian landscape. Fortunately, the only impact this haze had on anglers was to cause them to slow down on their trips offshore. Sea bass remained consistent with anglers averaging 10 keepers a trip with a few hitting their limits of 15. The headboat "Judith M" reported several limit days on their 8 hours trips. Anglers also saw increases in the catch of flounder on the inshore wrecks and reefs, but most were undersized.

The inland bays were continuing to warm and several headboats started their 2 hour bay trips in Ocean City finding keepers in the Thorofare and the bay behind Assateague. The Lewes Canal was still the place for inland flounder in DE. Jake Wilkins caught a 26" flatfish there that weighed 8 lbs. and 10

oz. to set a new Heaviest for the season in DE.

The surf action was beginning to wane with fewer rocks and drum being caught. The stripers that were caught were early in the morning or just after sunset. All were oversized. Several good sized rays were reported from MD beaches.

Tuna dominated the action in the canyons again. Surface temps were in the mid 60's from the Norfolk to the tip of the Poor Man's Canyon. Even so most of the action was in the Poor Man's in 50 to 100 fathoms. There were many reports of 6 man boat limits this week. One that was notable was the charter boat "Boss Hogg" who had an amazing 3 day run bringing a total of 54 yellowfins to the docks at Sunset Marina. The "Spring Mix II" and "Pumpin' Hard" also returned with limits after finding water in the 68° range. The bite did slow as the week progressed and we saw anglers switching to deep dropping with several nice golden tilefish finding their way ashore.

An angler got \$5,000 richer this week after releasing a white

marlin. Keith Garner was fishing on the "Bill Slayer" out of the Indian River Marina when he connected with a white on a skirted ballyhoo. While not the first of the season, it was only the second one we heard of and it was the first by a member of the Ocean City Marlin Club entitling Keith to a nice payout. The first blue marlin for 2023 was also caught by the crew of the "Rhonda's Osprey" in the Poor Man's Canyon.

Sharks were in the mix too. Our "Chum Lines" author Mark Sampson reported 2 encounters with great white sharks on a single trip. The first was estimated at 13' and about 2,000 lbs., the second at 10' feet and 500 lbs. On another trip his angler caught a ~7' smooth hammerhead on a fly rod! Rounding out the First Fish of the season for this week was the first wahoo caught by Josh Short of Smyrna, DE. The 53 lbs. speedster was in the Poor Man's Canyon.

June 21, 2023

It was a good weather week inshore and off with only some afternoon winds and a

wicked storm that blew through Delaware on Friday. A lot of boats got on the water. We saw the first offshore tournament of the season and the first swordfish for 2023 hit the scales at the Ocean City Fishing Center. The Bass Grounds were living up to their name with active catches of sea bass and the flounder were on the near shore wrecks and reefs in earnest.

Sea bass at the Bass Grounds were plentiful, but most were undersized. The keeper ratio dropped to 6-8 for a day. Larger jigs with clam proved a better choice for finding larger fish. Headboats like the "Judith M" out of Bahia Marina were still on their 8 & 10 hours trips and anglers were not as crowded as we were still in 'pre-season' before schools got out for the summer. The "Judy V" based at the Indian River Marina were seeing a good mix of sea bass, flounder and some triggers at sites 15-20 miles out.

Both bays were now active with flounder as warmer water pushed in. Both inlets as well were good spots for bluefish and smaller rocks. Luke Wrye was fishing the Rt. 50 Bridge and hooked a 33" bluefish despite having his lure caught in the net.

Offshore the tuna bite was thin, some nice shark catches were reported, undersized cobia were showing up and a surprise first swordfish for the season was landed.

The 3rd Annual Tuna & Tiaras Ladies Tuna Tournament held weigh ins at the Ocean City Fishing Center. 58 boats and 291 anglers battled some sparse fishing conditions to bring several bigeye and chunky yellowfin tunas to the scales. It seemed the bigger fish were in the northern canyons. The top tuna was a 183 lb. bigeye caught by the crew of the "Roncito", beating 2nd place by over 100 lbs. They started in the Hayes and worked their way down toward the Wilmington where they hooked the winning eyeball taking an hour to land. The Heaviest Stringer went to the bunch on the "Pumpin' Hard". They had 9 yellowfins for the day from the Baltimore and the 5 heaviest weighed in at 191 lbs. Outside the tournament there were a few other bigeyes caught mostly in the Wilmington. Crews were hitting the docks with yellowfin tunas in the low single digits.

If tuna fishing was slow, billfishing was almost at a standstill. We only had reports of 3 blue marlin releases from



It was a mid November trigger for Bill Wissinger. He caught this hefty on while fishing with Capt. Carey Evans on the charter boat "Grizzly" based at the Lewes Harbour Marina.



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the central canyons.

June 28, 2023

It was the week of the 4th of July and the prime summer season had fully kicked in. Lots of boats out despite some 'on and off' weather. There were a couple outstanding tuna days, but no billfish reports and only a few mahi. Some turned to target tilefish with a few nice goldens hitting the scales. Inshore the reefs and wrecks were hopping. Captains on the headboats "Judy V", "Judith M" and the "Angler" all reported their crews getting limit catches of flounder. Sheepshead had also started to show up, mainly on the southern sites. Sheepies were also found at the Outer Wall. Flounder in both bays and both inlets also saw bluefish and stripers.

There were two tournaments to report. The 8th Annual Kid's Catch All at the Indian River Marina saw a mess of young anglers bringing over 12 species of fish to the scales. The 5th Annual Fish N Paddle Saltwater slam also concluded. Over 60 anglers competed in this kayak only event. Tyler Clazey took the top spot with a two day stringer total of 31.7 lbs. for 2 bluefish and a 12 lb. striper.

The "Boss Hogg" graced our cover with an epic catch from the Baltimore Canyon. They set the spread in 70 fathoms of 70° water and hooked up early and often. By the time they got back to Sunset Marina they had 6 bigeyes, 13 yellowfins and a couple gaffer mahi in the box! The "Rhona's Osprey" landed 3 eyeballs and 7 yellowfin in the Wilmington. The charter boat "Fish On" was trolling the edge between the Wilmington and Baltimore Canyons in 66° water and got covered up with 6 big hits. They miraculously landed all 6 bigeyes ranging from 138-191 lbs. The hot bite however cooled as fast as it came after some wind blew through.

The Delaware Bay was hopping with sharks. The "Top Fin" hooked 26 on one trip, getting 19 to the boat. The largest was estimated at 250 lbs.

July 5, 2023

As we rolled into July anglers found a great mix of fish to target, despite the increased pressure from the crowds. There were several great weather days and even a couple that made the canyons look like a lake.

While the sea bass bite had cooled a little, some nice keepers were still coming over the rails. Flounder became the primary target with the near shore

reefs and wrecks yielding limit catches for many anglers. "On the Run" came back from Reef Site 10 with appropriately 10 keepers up to 22". Red hake, trigger fish and cutlass fish were now in the mix and a lucky customer on the "Angler" reeled in a 39" cobia. At just 1" short of a keeper, it was almost our first cobia of the season. Further north, the Old Grounds and A Buoy were the hot spots. Closer in the Fenwick Shoals and 1st Lump became productive for spanish mackerel. Sheepshead were around the OC Jetty and Indian River Inlet. The convicts were also thick at the CBBT all the way up to the Tangier Sound. In the back bay both inlets were good for flounder. The Thorofare, Massey's Ditch and Lewes Canal continued to produce nice flatfish. For those looking for the man in the brown suit, the CBBT and lower Chesapeake was hot.

Tuna remained the primary catch offshore, however the days ran very hot or cold. The Ocean City Marlin Club hosted its 41st Canyon Kickoff over the weekend. 34 boats entered the fray with mostly 35-45 lb. yellowfins hitting the scales at Sunset Marina. One 219 lb. bigeye from the middle of the Washington Canyon from the "Fish On" did dominate as the only eyeball to the scales taking 1st Place, beating second place by over 160 lbs. At the time it was the Heaviest of the season but was shortly bested by a 221 lb. bigeye caught on the "Obsession" out of Bahia Marina. The Rockpile was the hot spot for yellowfin and shark bites!

All of the billfish reported were single fish per trip in the southern canyons in deep water. A lone blue marlin was released in the Wilmington by the "Loose Knot".

July 12, 2023

Hot weather and low winds set the stage for some excellent fishing. The sea bass were getting beefier and the flounder were still snapping. It was prime season for sheepshead and croakers in the Ocean City Bay north of the Rt. 90 Bridge. Offshore remained challenging but a new Heaviest Fish for the season was set.

The Old Grounds, Great Eastern and A Buoy were the busy spots for knotheads and flatfish. Triggers were in the mix too. Action was consistent in the bays from the ESVA to the Delaware with both inlets and the Lewes Canal being most

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There were red drum and bluefish in the surf. Numen Bila reeled in a monster off the beach in Fenwick, a butterfly ray with a 7' wingspan. Clams were still abundant for the raking in early season.

The week started with most of the offshore action in the Washington Canyon and expanded a little north to the Poor Man's as the week progressed. Tuna was tight with most catches in the low single digits. The "Reel Passion" set a new Heaviest Bigeye for a Delaware based boat with a 234 lb. eyeball from the Washington Canyon weighed at Hook'em & Cook'em. Likewise, the "Bill Slayer" set the bar with an 86 lb. bluefin tuna they caught just 12 miles off the Jersey Coast. With a slow tuna bite, many turned to deep dropping and finding blueline and golden tilefish. The "Ro Sham Bo" landed their first swordfish of the season on an overnight trip to the Washington.

Some billfish were in the northern canyons. The "Kilo Charlie" ran up to the Spencer and released 2 whites. They also got 3 yellowfins in the box including a 94 pounder that set a new heavy for the season to

date. Andy Drip spent an hour and a half fighting a blue marlin in the Wilmington Canyon and the "Roll Groove" released 3 blues and a white on the same day.

July 19, 2023

We were in full summer and mother nature reminded us with hot & humid weather that also brought fast and severe afternoon storms. The flounder action on the nearshore wrecks and reefs was insane with many anglers catching their limits. The Old Grounds was most productive with anglers using big baits to get big fish. A few hooked some nice red drum over 40 lbs. on their flounder rigs. The bays and inlets, while not as hot, were consistent in the deeper channels. Snapper blues were at the 1st Lump and clark spoons were snagging spanish macks at the shoals. Cobia were there too. Down south there was clear water ocean side on the ESVA while the Chesapeake warmed slowing the action.

The Ocean City Tuna Tournament dominated the offshore action. 74 boats entered and battled with lack luster action and very sporty weather. Despite it all some nice fish came to the scales from the tourney and elsewhere. The "Cabana"

swept the event taking both the top stringer award and heaviest fish, the first time in the event's 36-year history. They worked the edge of the Norfolk both days landing a single bigeye each day and 4 chunky yellowfins to make a 2 day stringer total of 763 lbs. Their eyeball on day one at 236 lbs. secured 1st Place for Heaviest Tuna. As only one of a few bigeyes caught that week, it was not the largest. That honor went to the "Ro Sham Bo" for a 246.4 lb. fish from the Washington. It set the record for Heaviest of the Season so far. While the Washington was where the bigeye action was, some like the "No Limit" were finding yellowfins at the inshore lumps chunking butterfish. One of their trips saw 13 in the box including one at 91 lbs. making a new Heaviest for the Season in DE.

The only billfish we heard of this week were two sailfish from the Norfolk in 1000 fathoms and a swordfish. The sword was a nice gift for Capt. Mark Hoos as he celebrated his 60th birthday. The 284 lb. fish actually hit on a tuna bait while the crew was drifting and fighting a tuna!

July 26, 2023

Another beautiful week blessed Delmarva with seasonal highs

and humidity. Fishing in the canyons was still slow, but consistent at least with mahi making a splash. Big flounder continued to be the primary catch inshore with triggers, sheepshead and some of the largest redfish in years. The usual hot spots in the bays continued to be hot!

The Delaware Bay specifically saw an influx of action as the Paradise Bay Flounder Tournament kicked off. The top 2 fish were both 5.9 lbs., however Luke Horney's was a quarter inch longer giving him the top slot.

The Ocean City Marlin Club held its 19th Annual Kid's Classic with fish of all types and sizes getting weighed at Sunset Marina. 1st Place for spot went to the "Partnership" at 2 lbs. 2nd Place was a 9 way tie! Notable was the Unusual Catch which was a gaff that the "Restless Lady" had lost fighting 12 bigeye earlier in the week!

The ESVA saw slow action in the Chesapeake, however the Atlantic surf held kingfish and some sport spotails.

While billfish were elusive, the "Reel Chaos" was on the cover with 3 white marlin they managed to release during the Kid's Classic. The "Max Bet"

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also released 3 during the event. All from offshore of the Poor Man's in 900 fathoms.

Tuna were picky, but consistent with a mix of bigeye and yellowfins. Breaking the bank was the "Restless Lady". She was at the 19 Fathom Lump headed to the Poor Man's when 12 rods came tight, all bigeyes! Amazingly the crew was able to get 8 in the box with one launching the afore mentioned gaff out of the boat with its tail. Like the billfish, the yellowfins were offshore of the Poor Man's. The "Sea Hag" was there and caught a 156 lb. allison tuna setting a new heaviest to date for yellowfin. The mahi were in the deep water too and were the best catch of the week.

Another record was shattered when angler Jeff McCoy set a new state record in Delaware for a king mackerel. He was anchored at the Fenwick Shoals shark fishing when the big fish hit on a mackerel fillet (irony?). The 56" and 52.7 lb. fish beat a record set almost 30 years prior.

August 2, 2023

High temps, pop up storms and hot water were the headlines for this week. Air temps were in the 90's, water at the Jack Spot was in the 80's and a storm was moving in for the weekend.

Flounder was still hot in the bays as was the inshore bite with a few other species entering the mix. Tuna and tilefish remained the main fair in the canyons and a tournament shift strategy.

The wrecks and reefs remained the spot for big flatfish. Deeper wrecks at the Great Eastern and Old Grounds were most referenced. In the bays, anglers had success working deeper holes in the bay behind Assateague Island. In Delaware it was Massey's Landing and the Lewes Canal. All the inlets from DE to ESVA held keepers.

Capt. Chris Mizurak on the "Angler" reported the sea bass were picky so most were catching flounder. The kingfish did not seem to mind the warm water at the Jack Spot with several big fish hitting coolers. Capt. Rick Shoaff on the "Judith M" had a rare day with lots of spadefish coming over the rail.

The heat shut down most of the action on the ESVA but the specs seemed to like it. Drew Stergis landed a 28" speckled trout in the lower Chesapeake.

Friday and Saturday saw 6-8 waves offshore with intervals as tight as 5 seconds. This caused the directors of the Big Fish Classic to add a day to their tournament, only the second

time in 10 years that the schedule had to be adjusted. This pushed our coverage of the event by a week. So the crew from the "Double Trouble" out of the Talbot Street Pier were on the cover with a pair of black belly rosefish caught 40 miles out.

Bigeye tuna were still around, mainly in the Washington. Yellowfin were concentrated in the Poor Man's. "Marli" owner Mike Bostic and crew found 10 yellowfin at the Rockpile. Sharks were becoming an issue however.

We could count billfish catch reports on two hands. Interestingly the "Salty Reel" was chunking for tuna at some inshore lumps and landed a 53 lb. sailfish!

August 9, 2023

It was a first for the Coastal Fisherman. We had covers on the front and back. Due to the Big Fish Classic extending the event we had the 'big fish' on the cover and the winners of the Ocean City Marlin Club's Heels & Reels Ladies Tournament on the back page. We also saw a new tournament; Marlin's for Mason and the Ocean Pine Chamber of Commerce held their annual flounder tournament.

A Buoy was busy for anglers

on the "Judy V" and "Capt. Bob II" with heavy keeper flatfish and triggers. A new heaviest flounder for the season was set for Maryland when Capt. Dave Caffrey of "On the Run" charters weighed a 28" and 8 lb., 4 oz. fish at Bahia Marina. He caught that one at an Ocean City Reef Foundation site. The top 3 fish at the Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce Flounder Tournament were only separated by 3/4 of a pound. Ty Hubicki took the top slot with a 24.25" and 5.31 lb. fish. Interestingly, Ty is the grandson of Ron Fisher who started the event 16 years prior.

Three offshore tournaments were covered in this edition, and the fishing was tough. The top boat in the Heels & Reels was "Cabana", going 6 for 6 on white marlin. The inaugural Marlin's for Mason tournament was held to raise money and awareness for Dravet Syndrome. Over the two day event 25 white marlin were released and a couple blue marlin. The "Outlier" took 1st Place with a 1,000 points. The spot for billfish this week was outside of the Baltimore in 700-1,200 Fathoms.

In addition to the unusual schedule change for the Big Fish Classic, another 1st was set. The

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“Port-A-Bella” won both the ‘Big Fish’ category and the Heaviest Stringer division. The first time a boat has won both in the event’s 10 year history earning them a combined payout over \$200,000.

While there were a couple nice bigeyes over 200 lbs. caught, this was the week for allison tuna! 3 of the big yellowfins were reported. “Fish On” had a 92” fish from the Poor Man’s, “No Slack” caught a 99 pounder on a dink rod in the Washington and “Fish Whistle” set the record for the Heaviest Yellowfin from a DE boat for the year with their 132 lb. allison from the Norfolk!

August 16, 2023

It was the week of the White Marlin Open and what a special one it was. Not only because it was the 50th Annual, but for more records broken! Nearshore flounder still ruled and spanish macks were abundant in the shallows.

There were over 400 boats in the WMO with a purse of over \$10M up for grabs. There was plenty of billfish action with over 550 white marlin and 48 blue marlin released, better than in recent years. However, only 1 white and 2 blue made it to the scales, and out of those 3 only 1 qualified! It

was the 640.5 lb. blue caught by John Ols below the Poor Man’s on the “Floor Reel”. As the only qualifying billfish the crew won an amazing payout of over \$6 million. That not only set a WMO tournament record for a single payout, but at the time it was the largest single payout ever for a fishing tournament. Other big winners included the 1st Place Tuna from “Reel Tight”. Their 265 lb. bigeye from the Washington earned over \$1M in prize money and was the Heaviest Bigeye for Maryland in 2023. The other big money winner was the “Ro Sham Bo”. While their 215 lb. eyeball qualified for 4th Place, they had gone ‘all in’ betting in all the calcuttas including the \$50K Heaviest White Marlin Winner Take All. Since no qualifying whites were weighted, that money flowed down. The “Floor Reel” had not entered, nor did the top 3 finishing tuna, so the crew of the “Ro Sham Bo” took home over \$1.7M for a fish they did not catch!

The bigeye were in the Washington with many over 200 lbs. hitting the scales. Mahi were there too including a 50.5 pounder caught by “Roncito” during the WMO earning 1st Place in that division.

Inshore flounder hot spots were the African Queen and the Old Grounds with temps in the 70’s. Spanish macks were all over the 1st and 2nd Lumps as well as the Fenwick Shoals. Sheepshead were gaining momentum at the Icebreaker Wall in the Delaware Bay as well as the south OC Jetty. The bays from ESVA to DE suffered from dirty water from the winds, the OC bay from the WMO traffic. Still, nice keepers were found on higher tides that provided clearer water. Down south in VA saw the start of the red drum spawning run.

August 23, 2023

Heat set in pushing fish deeper in the bays and on the wrecks. The winds made fishing a little less comfortable. Some schools and school sports were restarting thinning the crowds a little. Bahia Marina hosted their annual Capt. Steve Harman’s Poor Girl’s Open ladies billfishing tournament. The Paradise Grill held their Flounder Pounder Open, and with a top prize of \$100K it is the richest flounder tournament in the world!

It was hot, and flounder and sea bass were finding deeper water. The flatfish were still cooperating however, the sea

bass were being more selective. Some had success with keepers at the Rockpile in depths of 100’ or more. The headboats had moved to 8 & 10 hour trips offering anglers more time to get to deeper water. Sheepshead were now at the wrecks as well as the inlets. Down south big reds were in the lower Chesapeake.













The bays across the region were dirty from a combination of boat traffic and the ever present wind. Less trafficked areas were more successful. The big winner in the Flounder Pounder Open was the crew on the “Me Boat”. On the last day of the 5 day event they brought a 9.9 lb. flounder to the scales, jumping into first place and taking home the \$100K prize!

The canyons were not a happy place. The winds were tough and the bite tougher. Still, the teams in the Poor Girls Open braved the waves and put some nice numbers on the leaderboard. 1st Place for billfish release went to the ladies on the charter boat “Reel Chaos”. Capt. Anthony Matarese bucked the trend of the rest of the fleet and ran 98 miles northeast out to the Spencer Canyon where they went 4 for 5 on white marlin. They even had a blue on for a short time. They were rewarded for their efforts

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with a payout of over \$100k. The event also raised over \$100K for the American Cancer Society. The bigeye action finally slowed down. While yellowfins could be found across the canyons and inshore lumps, crews were getting low single digits per trip. When tuna are scarce, we see a lot more tilefish and that happened here. Many anglers were able to get abundant amounts of peanut mahi while trolling for tuna.

August 30, 2023

The last big money tournament of the season wrapped up with even more records being set. The billfish were biting, but anglers had to run far north to get in on the action. Bay action improved as the waters cooled a little and boat traffic ebbed as Labor Day approached. Headboats were getting a good mix for their customers of keeper flounder, larger sea bass and some mahi.

The 32nd Annual MidAtlantic Tournament concluded after 5 days of great fishing. 181 boats entered with 115 of them berthed in Ocean City. Fortunately for this event the billfish cooperated with 750 white marlin caught, even though most had to make long runs to outside of the northern canyons. This is a uniqueness

to the MidAtlantic compared to other tournaments. Due to the two port strategy including Cape May and OC, captains are allowed to run 125 miles from the OC sea buoy vs 100 as in most other events. Fortunate as the whites and blues topping the leaderboard came from the Carteret, Lindenkohl and Spencer Canyons. The top white at 87 lbs. was caught by "Common Sense" out of Cape May. Local charter boat "Boss Hogg" took 2nd Place with a 73" and 76 lb. roundscale from outside the Lindenkohl. While not the top fish, they did get the biggest payout of the event and a tournament record at over \$1.4M as they were 'across the board' in all the calcuttas. The "Pipe Dreamer" also had a big payday for their 889 lb. blue marlin taking home over \$1.1M. This too was a record payout.

The pace for tuna had slowed, but the mix was still solid for yellowfins & eyeballs. Of the 58 weighed during the tournament, over 2 dozen were bigeye with only 2 breaking the 200 lb. mark. Mahi filled in the action where the tuna lagged. The "Spring Mix II" returned from the Baltimore with over 50 fish, a mix of peanuts and gaffers. Ralph Redden set a new Heaviest Fish for the season and

the year with the 43 pounder from the Poor Man's.

We had several spearfishing reports of interest as well. The crew of the "Unreel" speared an 80 lb. wahoo in the Poor Man's and John Davis drilled a 47.7 lb. cobia at an inshore shoal outside of the Indian River Inlet.

Inshore lumps, wrecks and reefs were holding big flounder and decent sized knotheads. The Great Eastern and Jack Spot were hot. Capt. Chris Mizurak on the "Angler" also reported lots of mahi in the mix, some up to 10 lbs. Houndfish were being found 3 miles outside of the Indian River Inlet.

The bays up and down the coast were strong and consistent for flounder, redfish and trout. Will McGrath of Lewes, DE earned a DE Citation for the big 25.5" weakfish he fooled in the Lewes Canal using frozen shrimp.

September 6, 2023

Two offshore hurricanes pummeled the coastline for most of this week and made the waters offshore into a washing machine. That meant a lot more attention to the bays, inlets and even the rough surf! For those that did get offshore, mahi was the word.

Mother nature did allow a couple days that were manageable inshore and anglers were greeted with a great mix of fish. Flounder, sea bass, spot, reds and a whole lot of mahi were found with many head and charter boats returning with boat limits of 54 fish. Hot spots were the Fenwick and Marine Electric Shoals. The bays held lots of spot for fresh bait as well as junior reds and rocks. The Lewes Canal was yielding keeper flounder and stripers with spot and croakers in the mix. Further south big red drum were found in the lower Chesapeake and the cobia bite was still hot.

On the days boats could get offshore, it was mainly mahi and tilefish with a few yellowfins, mostly from the Washington. The "MARLI" did post one strong trip returning with 4 yellowfins and 50 mahi from there. Some billfish were at inshore lumps like the Hambone and the central canyons. The "Pumpin' Hard" had a notable trip to the Baltimore and went 3 for 5 on whites and released a blue marlin.

September 13, 2023

The winds we faced all summer took a break and glass like conditions were found all the way to the canyons. The tuna bite remained slow and sharks took their share, but mahi and tilefish more than made up the difference.

Deeper spots in the bays offered the best chance for keeper flounder. Sites like the East Channel and by the airport in OC, the Indian River Inlet or in water over 15' in the DE Bay. Danny Cox caught the heaviest flounder to date near the Rt. 50 bridge. It was 27" and over 9 lbs. We also celebrated Big Bird Croppers 60th birthday!

The Bahia Marina hosted their annual Flounder Pounder. Team Halfers took top honors with a 21" flatfish caught in the West Channel just north of Hoopers. The crew was a team of deckhands from the marina and they took home a cool \$5,900.

The mahi had moved to deeper water but were still plentiful. The tuna bite was slow, but the crew on "The Clarkey" had a nice catch and a crazy story. They hooked into a bigeye in the Washington Canyon and as they got it closer to the boat, the rod broke in half. Angler Chris Ford then handlined the 170 lb. fish to the boat for the last 100'.

There were moderate billfish bites across the canyons. The "Billfisher" released 6 blue marlin and 4 whites south of the Norfolk. The "Fish Whistle" had a grand slam trolling in 300 fathoms of the Washington releasing 5 whites, 2 sailfish and a blue marlin. In a case of what could have been, the "Charlie's Plunder" released an 80 lb. white that could have been worth millions a few weeks prior!

September 20, 2023

Our last issue for the summer season offered highlights of some of the great catches over the season. Probably a good thing as Hurricane Lee ran through the area that week putting a real damper on fishing.

Inshore was still showing decent marlin and mahi catches even though the dolphin were small. Tuna remained elusive and more captains were marlin fishing. Most found success in the central canyons in 350-450 fathoms. Wahoo were showing up, perhaps a sign of the big run we saw in mid October. The "Reel Trickey" found a nice 33" speedster at the Hot Dog.

Off the beach anglers were catching some early black drum and a few reds plus rays. §

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Ryan Ellerman put in the time at Stinky Beach this fall targeting tog. This one hit on a hand tied tog rig dressed with whole green crabs.



An early November trip proved to be awesome for Chris Jenkins, Brian Skillman, Chris Little, Bob Ambrose and Denny Marsch on the "Fair Chase". They headed out 73 miles to get into 1200 fathoms where they raised 3 swordfish, the largest at 129 lbs. The crew also boated 2 bigeye and hooked into a wahoo that broke off at the boat. Pictured at Hook'em & Cook'em at the Indian River Marina.

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A collage of six photographs showing various fishing trips. The photos depict groups of people on boats and docks, surrounded by large catches of fish, including tuna, marlin, and swordfish. One photo shows a large group of people on a boat, another shows a large catch of fish on a dock, and others show smaller groups of people with their catches.

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The charter boat "Game Changer" had an epic late season trip to the Fenwick Shoals. They trolled around 35' of water and landed a bluefin tuna and about 16 massive rockfish with the *smallest* at 44"! The tuna and the rocks all hit on Joe Shutes with ballyhoo, unusual for stripers.

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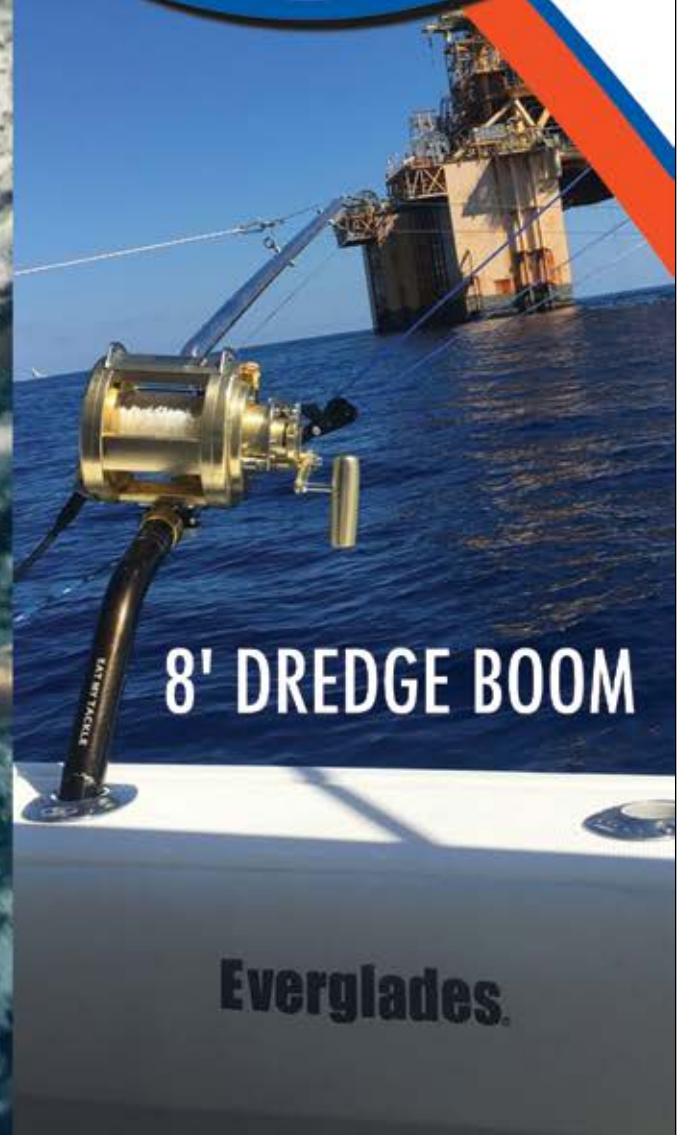
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Ship to Shore

STEVE'S MARINE SERVICE
by Steve Katz



2023 Season Summary and 2024 Thoughts

This Mid-Atlantic season started with full marinas and a lot of new or recently added used boats in the Ocean City area. Seems there were many boats bought and sold locally, keeping their local hailing ports. Both of our local custom sportfish builders, Duffie Boatworks and Titan Custom Yachts launched new builds this season. Hopefully you got a chance to see these beautiful boats at Sunset Marina. Thankfully, this spring and early summer season did not have the supply chain shortages as we have experienced in the past. The local boatyards remained busy with service projects through the season. Besides some engine part shortages, it did not seem like any boats were excessively delayed getting ready for the Mid-Atlantic fishing season. When it comes to the marine electronics industry, most of the manufactures have caught up on the supply chain, and even the most popular products and accessories were in-stock. Some of the major manufactures, such as Furuno and Garmin have introduced new products that are readily available.

We still have a shortage of skilled labor in the marine trade and other industries around the world. Those who planned winter and spring projects well in advance were the ones most

likely to be finished on schedule.

One manufacturer expanding their marine offering is Dometic, who has slowly been buying other manufacturers, including products in the following sectors: Air Conditioners, Blinds, Soft Furnishing, Refrigerators, Galley, Toilets, Holding Tanks & Pumps, Engine Control and Steering Systems. The Dometic air conditioning and steering systems are the most popular products and have seen upgrades and new models introduced. They recently introduced a new air conditioner product line - the Voyager. It is a variable capacity, self-contained air-conditioner allowing you to quickly cool or warm with superb efficiency. Once the temperature has reached the desired set point, the compressor will run at a reduced speed. This results in quiet operation, energy savings, improved dehumidification, and a constant temperature for ultimate comfort.

When it comes to the helm, Both Garmin and Furuno have recently introduced larger multifunction displays. Furuno introduced 22" and 24" (TZT22X and TZT24X) displays in their NavNet TZtouch3 product line. Garmin now offers the industry's largest multifunction display a 27", one of the new GPSMAP 9000 series product line.

Finally, this fall we saw availability return for the most

popular omni style sonars from Furuno and Simrad. Both the Furuno CSH8LMK2 unit and the Simrad SY50 are currently available for purchase. By the looks of east coast boatyards, there is a steady stream of 8" sonar tubes being installed for omni sonars.

SpaceX launched its first batch of Starlink internet service satellites in 2019. Adoption of the service has ballooned since then. The company indicates they currently have more than 2 million active customers and service is available on all seven continents in over 60 countries. For those who are not familiar with Starlink, the company offers broadband internet service beamed to earth from orbiting satellites to a terminal (antenna) on your boat, home, office, or airplane. There were some early marine adopters using land-based hardware and subscriptions with good success until terms and conditions changed. Since then, Starlink has continuously changed hardware and subscription offerings, but changes have recently settled down and the current maritime offerings have remained the same for a few months. While everyone seems to have a different need and budget for internet connections, the maritime antenna and 50GB metered plan seem to be the most popular for offshore

sportfish boats. The coverage is only getting better as Starlink expands by adding satellites on a regular basis, each Falcon 9 rocket launch typically carries 23 Starlink satellites into low earth orbit.

When it comes to saltwater trolling motors, Minn Kota and Rhodan have cornered the market for years and not surprisingly Garmin introduced their Force® Kraken this summer, indicating that it is the most powerful trolling motor the recreational fishing market has ever seen. Coupled with Garmin's most precise anchor lock technology, Kraken is designed with longer shaft lengths and a pivot-style mount for easy installation on boats where bow space is limited, like skiffs, bay boats and center consoles boats. Available in 63", 75" and 90" shaft lengths with dual voltage (24v/36v) brushless motor generating up to 100 lbs. of thrust.

Seakeeper, the leader in gyroscopic stabilization, introduced a few new models this year, the 4, 4.5 and 40. The Seakeeper 4, for boats ~38-44 ft., and the Seakeeper 4.5, for boats ~40-46 ft., were designed to maximize angular momentum or gyroscopic power, per cubic inch. In terms of physical footprint, the new models are 7% smaller and can fit into the same space as the Seakeeper 3, making the Seakeeper 4 a viable trade-in and upgrade option. The Seakeeper 4.5 fills the gap in the current model lineup for boats with generators, offering an option that's 30% smaller than the current Seakeeper 5 and Seakeeper 6 models. These

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two new models operate on the same platform but incorporate different motors, drives, and electronics to allow the Seakeeper 4 to operate on DC power and the Seakeeper 4.5 to run on AC power, giving boaters options based on whether their specific vessel has a generator onboard.

Seakeeper also introduced a new product line this year, the Ride system, a first-of-its-kind Vessel Attitude Control System (VACS). While these may seem like just another interceptor style trim tab, the Ride system is designed to be installed in the same location as traditional trim tabs but operates completely differently than other products. The features of the Ride far outperform traditional trim tabs and other similar self-leveling systems on the market. Traditional trim tab systems simply do not have the speed, technology or sensors required to constantly maintain a stable ride. Often, wave motions occur too quickly for trim tab adjustments. Utilizing Seakeeper Ride's proprietary software and hardware, the Ride rapid-deployment rotary blades make 100 adjustments every second to combat wave motions, resulting in a smooth level ride calibrated to your boat and desired running attitude. A demo ride this summer in Ocean City quickly showed how effortlessly the boat jumped onto a plane and immediately leveled out, drastically different from running the same boat without the system activated. Even with people moving side to side while underway, the boat always remained level.

Sounder heave compensation - have you noticed your sounder produces a jagged bottom return in rough seas or high swells? Garmin now offers heave compensation (as Furuno and Simrad have for a while) with some of their product combinations. In wavy conditions, the image of the sea floor on the sounder screen may rise and lower with the vessel as it is affected by waves. You can activate the heave compensation feature to adjust for the sea condition and provide a steady sounder image. To use the heave compensation feature a compatible transducer, chartplotter and satellite compass is required to process the bottom return to compensate for the heave action of the boat.

Have you heard about SIONYX? They introduced their first consumer marine product last fall, the Nightwave marine low

light camera for enhanced vision at night. SIONYX, has been around for a while, it spun out of a Harvard laboratory in 2006 when they discovered black silicon to improve the sensitivity of silicon-based photodetectors and image sensors in low-light and night-vision applications. Most of their previous work has been with US military applications and now consumer products. The Nightwave is not a thermal camera, it uses a unique optical sensor (CMOS) that can provide a color picture in extreme darkness. The camera gathers available ambient light such as the moon and stars in conjunction with local man-made waterfront light, to provide an impressive view that can be displayed on a multifunction helm display. Another notable feature is that this compact camera is priced below other similar "night vision" cameras.

When it comes to marine electronics, as past Chairman of the Board of the National Marine Electronics Association, I would be remiss if I did not mention the annual NMEA product of excellence award winners announced at the NMEA fall 2023 conference. If you have any of these products on your boat, you have made an excellent choice, and if you are shopping, be sure to consider the listed award winners. NMEA members cast votes for their choice of the best in each category, this year's winners are:

2023 Product of Excellence Awards

- Marine VHF — Icom M510 Class D DSC
- Satellite TV Antenna — KVH TracVision UHD7
- Radar — Furuno DRS4DNXT
- Fishfinder — Furuno DFF3D Multi-Beam Sonar
- Satellite Comm. Antenna — KVH TracNet H60
- Marine Camera — Teledyne FLIR M364C
- Multi-Function Display — Garmin GPSMAP 8616xsv
- AIS — Vesper Marine Cortex M1 smartAIS
- Multimedia Entertainment — Fusion Apollo MS-RA770
- Autopilot — Garmin Reactor 40 with SmartPump
- NMEA 2000 Sensor — Furuno SCX20 Satellite Compass
- Remote Monitoring — GOST GNT-Evolution
- Marine PC Software — Nobeltec TimeZero Pro
- Safety Device — Garmin GPSMAP 86sci Handheld
- Wi-Fi/Cellular Device — Wave

Wi-Fi Tidal Wave

- Commercial — Furuno FAR2228BB IMO Radar
- Marine Specialty — Furuno CSH8LMK2 Omni Sonar

Manufacturer of the Year Awards

- Actisense won Manufacturer Level 1&2 (small to midsize company)
- Garmin won the Manufacturer Level 3 award for large Manufacturer
- Best New Product Award - Furuno's FCV800 fishfinder.
- NMEA Technology Award - Sensor Marine's Boat Monitor

What is ahead in 2024?

The newest Garmin GPSMAP 9000 series will certainly gain traction, introduced this fall, it is an all-new series with 4K resolution displays up to 27" and incorporating gigabit ethernet, called Garmin BlueNet™, similar to the NMEA OneNet. Other new Garmin BlueNet™ compatible products are now available, such as sounders, radar, and networking devices. Unfortunately, this also means that some existing products are being discontinued. If you have an older Garmin system and

want to expand, be sure to check compatibility and integration requirements when mixing and matching different vintage products.

Most manufacturers typically introduce new products during the winter/spring boat show season and when it comes to chartplotters/multifunction displays - the heart of the boat's helm, I would expect other manufacturers to introduce new products now that Garmin has a new product line.

Multifunction display software updates are still a terrific way to breed new life into your existing hardware. As an example, Garmin has issued new marine software 3 times since July 2023, and while it is not imperative to update immediately, often new useful features become available.

Plan ahead in 2024 to keep your boat up to date with maintenance, technology and of course, fishing gear. Whether safety, maintenance or just a desired upgrade, there are numerous modern technologies and products that will help keep your boat in good condition and help to provide owners, captains and anglers a safe and productive fishing trip. \$

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Shaun Flaherty, Keven Keane and Morgan Mericle had a great couple of days catching big fish at the end of September at the Rt. 50 Bridge despite the wind. They caught 29"-34" stripers including this keeper caught in the morning on an outgoing tide. Other keepers included a 20" sheephead and a 32" red drum. All were caught on swimbaits.

Capt. Chris Huk on the "Restless Lady II" shared he had not seen such great wahoo fishing so close to shore. This trip to the Elephant Trunk with mate Yanni Harris saw 5 speedsters in the box with the largest at 88 lbs and another at 77 lbs. Magictail Outfitters lures secured most of the bites and held up to the sharp teeth.


2024

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 <p>CROAKER 8" Minimum • No Limit</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 16" minimum 4 per person/day</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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It took both Jimmy Hall of Ocean City and Rich Bondi of Frankford, DE to hold up this 68" & 72 lb. wahoo. This one hit on a Chugger Daisy Chain while they were fishing on the "Ramble On" in the Washington Canyon.



Yellowfin tuna and sharks were still biting in early October as this catch from the charter boat "C-Boys" shows. Capt. Luke Blume had the group trolling at the 800/800 where they were able to get 12½ tuna in the boat and 7 mahi. They lost a couple more whole tuna to the taxman. Pictured at Sunset Marina.



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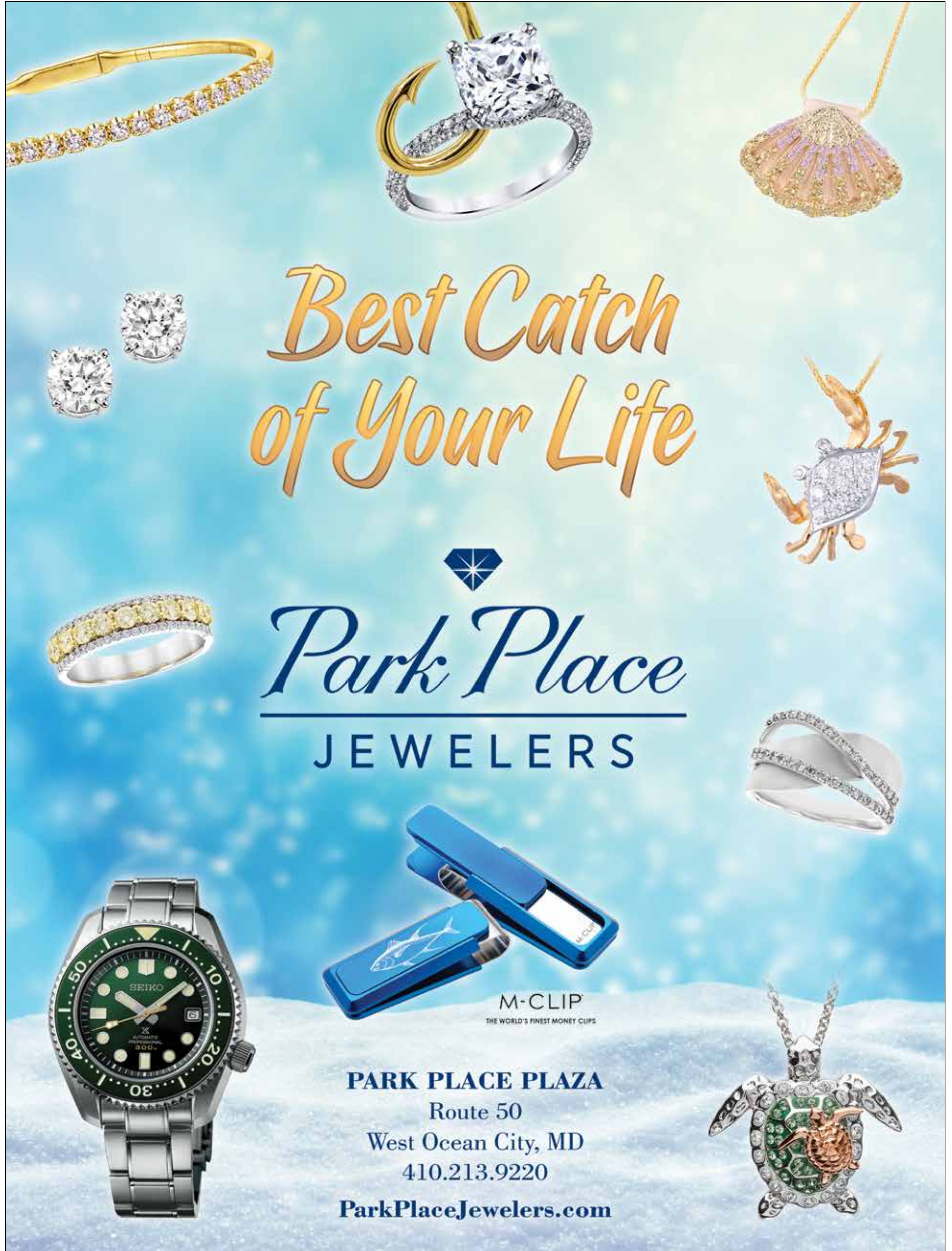
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Greg Krauss and crew chartered the “Pumpin’ Hard” to target some tuna in late October. When they did not cooperate, Capt. Mike Burt and mate David Burt switched and headed to south of the Washington in 1400’ and got the team on this 120 lb. sword and some nice bluefish. Pictured at Sunset Marina.



Big bluefin tuna right off the beach were calling and Jeff Kirby, Stephen Humphrey, Jim Pilkerton, Miles Glyphis, Rich Olsen and Lee Strolla answered the call! They headed out only 10 miles on the charter boat “Wrecker” with Capt. Jeremy Blunt and mate Jake Pilkerton and hooked this 60” keeper bluefin. Pictured at the Ocean City Fishing Center.



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THE GALLEY

by Chef Christine



Herb Baked Tautog

Ingredients:

For the herb butter:

- 1 stick (½ cup) butter
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh dill
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh garlic
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

For the fish:

4 tautog fillets, about 2 lbs.

¼ cup sliced green onions

Old Bay seasoning

Fresh cracked black pepper

Directions:

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Add remaining herb butter ingredients and stir to combine. Reduce heat to low while preparing fish.



Place fillets in a baking dish sprayed with cooking spray.

Pour herb butter over fish fillets. Sprinkle with desired amounts of Old Bay seasoning and pepper. Top with sliced green onions.

Bake (uncovered) for 10-15 minutes, or until fish is fully cooked and flaky.

Grilled Italian Swordfish with Creamy Lemon Caper Sauce

Ingredients:

8 Tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil

4 swordfish steaks, cut 1" thick

1 cup Italian-seasoned bread crumbs

1 cup Italian-seasoned panko crumbs

Garnish: Fresh-cut sprigs of Italian parsley

Garnish: Sliced lemons

For Creamy Lemon Caper Sauce:

8 Tablespoons Olive Oil

1/2 stick of high quality butter

1/2 cup of heavy cream

Juice of 1 medium-sized lemon

Zest of 1 small lemon

1-1/2 cups minced fresh-cut Italian parsley

4 cloves of fresh garlic, finely chopped

4 Tablespoons fresh-cut oregano, finely chopped

1/2 small jar of capers (if salted, rinse thoroughly)



Directions:

Drizzle each swordfish steak with olive oil and spread the oil evenly over each steak on all sides.

Using a shallow mid-size bowl, pour in the Italian seasoned bread crumbs and panko crumbs.

Place each oiled swordfish steak onto the bread crumbs and panko crumbs and then turn over, making sure that the steak is covered on all sides.

Get the grill heated.

Prepare the sauce.

While grill is warming up, heat all of the sauce ingredients in a saucepan.

Place on a very low simmer to keep the sauce warm while grilling the swordfish steaks.

Grill the steaks on a medium-low heat for 2 minutes on each side until the bread crumb coating is a nice gold-brown color.

The thicker the steak, the longer the time necessary to cook through, keeping in mind that the steaks should not be cooked to the point of being dry, but rather they should be moist and tender inside.

Pour a tablespoon of the creamy lemon caper sauce on top of each steak.

Garnish with sprigs of fresh-cut Italian parsley and slices of lemons.

Pass the remainder of the sauce around to guests.

Lobster Pasta

Ingredients:

Kosher salt

2 1½-lb. live lobsters

1 medium onion, coarsely chopped

2 celery stalks, trimmed, coarsely chopped

3 garlic cloves, peeled, smashed

2 sprigs basil or tarragon

4 cups heavy cream

½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes

1 lb. bucatini or spaghetti

1 Tbsp. unsalted butter

3 oz. Parmesan, finely grated (about 1 cup), plus more for serving

3 Tbsp. chopped chives

Freshly ground black pepper

Directions:

Fill a large pot with a tight-fitting lid with 2" of cold water. Generously season with salt and bring to a boil. Add lobsters to pot, cover, and steam until shells are bright red, about 8 minutes. (Better to slightly undercook the lobsters since you will be reheating the meat before serving.) Transfer lobsters to a large rimmed baking sheet and let sit until cool enough to handle.

Break down those lobsters! (Never picked lobster meat before? That's what YouTube is for!) Cut or tear off small legs and eat them (they

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make for a great snack). Remove tail meat, cut tail meat in half lengthwise, and cut each half into bite-size pieces; transfer to a medium bowl. Remove meat from knuckles and claws, doing your best to keep the meat as intact as possible (it's nice to have a whole claw for each person); add knuckle and claw meat to bowl with tail meat and chill until ready to serve.

With a sturdy knife, hack carapace and shells into 1" pieces and transfer to a large Dutch oven or pot. Add onion, celery, garlic, basil, cream, and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium and simmer, uncovered and stirring occasionally, until cream is reduced by half, about 45 minutes.

Strain lobster cream through a fine-mesh sieve into a medium bowl, pressing on solids to get as much liquid out as possible; discard solids. (If cream isn't reduced to about 2 cups, don't sweat it—you can always reduce it a bit more before adding the pasta.)

Cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water, stirring occasionally, until al dente. (You don't want it to be too al dente, as it's not going to spend that much time in the sauce.) Drain, reserving 1 cup of pasta cooking liquid.

Meanwhile, return lobster cream to Dutch oven or a wide deep skillet. Heat over medium and bring to a simmer; taste and season with salt. Add reserved lobster meat and butter to cream sauce and stir to combine.

Add pasta to Dutch oven and toss gently to combine (you don't want

to break up the lobster meat too much), adding 1 cup Parmesan a handful at a time until sauce is thick and cheese is incorporated. If sauce looks too thick, add a splash or two of reserved pasta cooking liquid to loosen it up. Remember: Cream sauces always thicken as they cool, so it's best to err on the side of loose.

Transfer lobster pasta to a platter. Top with chives and a few cranks of black pepper. Serve with more grated Parmesan alongside.

Do Ahead: Lobster cream sauce can be made 24 hours ahead. Strain and transfer to a resealable container and chill. Gently rewarm sauce in a Dutch oven over medium-low heat. Lobster meat can be picked 24 hours ahead. Cover and chill.

Easy Thai Shrimp Curry

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 small yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup thinly sliced scallions, white and green parts, from 4-5 scallions
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2½ tablespoons Thai green curry paste
- 1 (14-ounce) can coconut milk
- ¼ cup water
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon dark or light brown sugar
- 2 pounds large, extra large (26-30 per lb) or jumbo (21-25 per lb) shrimp, peeled and deveined (see note), thawed if frozen

Juice of 1 lime (about 2 tablespoons), plus more lime wedges for serving

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro, Thai basil, or Italian basil (or a combination)

Directions:

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring frequently, until soft, about 3 minutes. If the onions start to brown, reduce the heat to medium. Add the scallions, garlic, and green curry paste, and cook, stirring frequently, for 2 minutes more. Add the coconut milk, water, fish sauce, and sugar and bring to a gentle boil. Add the shrimp and cook, stirring frequently, until the shrimp are pink and just cooked through, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the lime juice and sprinkle with the cilantro (or basil). Taste and adjust seasoning, if necessary, and serve with jasmine rice.

Note: For the shrimp, I recommend buying frozen shrimp labeled "shell split and deveined." Most shrimp are cleaned and flash frozen shortly after being caught, so the "fresh" shrimp you see in the seafood case at the supermarket are typically thawed frozen shrimp. Who knows how



long they've been sitting there, so you're better off buying frozen shrimp and defrosting it yourself. Come dinnertime, all you have to do is run the shrimp under water to defrost, and then peel.

Oyster Casserole

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 6 tbsp unsalted butter divided
- ½ cup onion chopped
- ½ cup green bell pepper seeded and chopped
- ½ cup celery chopped
- ¼ cup scallions sliced, white and green parts



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- 3 cloves garlic minced
- 2 16 oz containers oysters fresh, drained and rinsed
- 8 oz mushrooms sliced
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour heaping
- 1 cup half and half
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp hot sauce
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese grated
- 1 tsp Kosher salt
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup breadcrumbs fresh, chopped from a loaf of bread with the crust mostly removed

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Heat the olive oil over medium-high heat in a large skillet. Stir in 2 tablespoons of the butter until melted. Add onion, bell pepper, and celery, and cook until soft, about 5 to 7 minutes. Add the scallions and garlic and cook for another minute.

Add oysters and mushrooms and bring to a simmer, stirring often, 5 minutes. Set aside.

Melt 2 tablespoons of the butter in



a medium saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in flour, and cook, whisking constantly, until smooth, 1 minute.

Stir in half and half, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce, salt, and pepper, whisking constantly, until very thick and beginning to bubble, about 2 to 5 minutes. Stir in Parmesan cheese until melted, about 1 more minute.

Using a fine-mesh sieve or colander, strain the oyster mixture, and discard the liquid.

Add oyster mixture to cheese sauce and stir until fully incorporated.

Spread mixture in an 11x7-inch baking dish.

Melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter, then toss breadcrumbs with melted butter and a pinch of salt. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs over the oyster mixture.

Bake for 15 minutes, or until bubbly. Remove the casserole from the oven and move the rack to the 2nd level under the broiler. Place the casserole under the broiler for 1 to 2 minutes, until the breadcrumb topping is slightly browned. Be sure to watch closely and don't let it burn, as broilers vary! Remove from oven and serve at once.

Parmesan Breaded Black Sea Bass

Ingredients:

- 8 ounce black sea bass, cut into 2 fillets
- 1/4 cup + 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs {or use regular breadcrumbs}

- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Pat each fillet dry with a paper towel.

In a shallow bowl mix the panko breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese, thyme, parsley, paprika, salt and pepper and stir until combined. Set aside. Pour the 1/4 cup olive oil into another shallow bowl.

Dredge the black sea bass in the olive oil and then into the dry ingredients making sure both sides are coated. Place on a clean plate.

Heat a cast iron skillet or a regular skillet over medium heat, warm the oil until a few water droplets sizzle when carefully sprinkled in the skillet. Sear the sea bass, skin side up, until it is well browned and easily releases from pan, about 3- 4 minutes. Flip over and cook until seared, about 1 minute.

KITCHEN CONVERSION COACH

Measurement

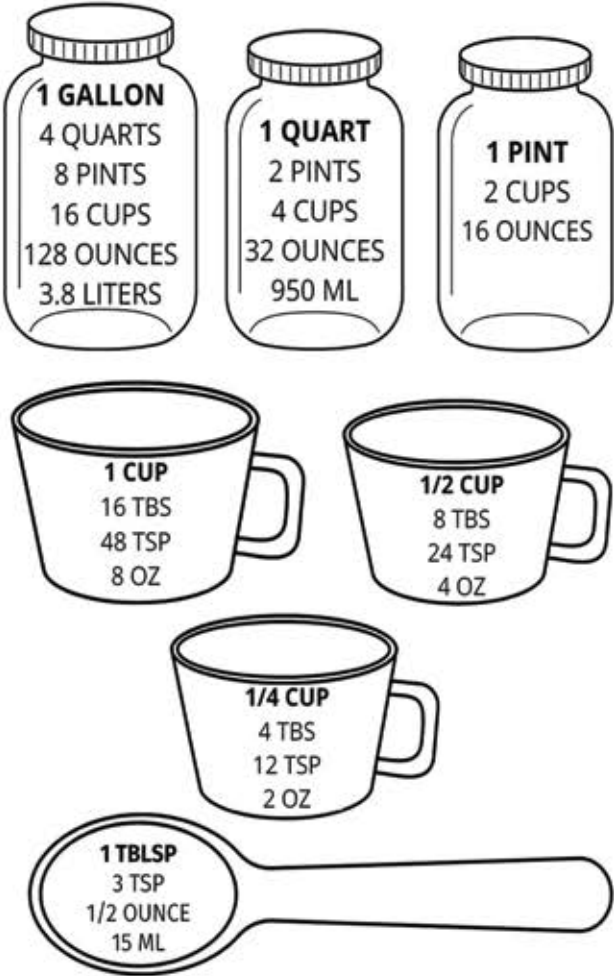
CUP	ONCES	MILLILITERS	TABLESPOONS
8 cup	64 oz	1895 ml	128
6 cup	48 oz	1420 ml	96
5 cup	40 oz	1180 ml	80
4 cup	32 oz	960 ml	64
2 cup	16 oz	480 ml	32
1 cup	8 oz	240 ml	16
3/4 cup	6 oz	177 ml	12
2/3 cup	5 oz	158 ml	11
1/2 cup	4 oz	118 ml	8
3/8 cup	3 oz	90 ml	6
1/3 cup	2.5 oz	79 ml	5.5
1/4 cup	2 oz	59 ml	4
1/8 cup	1 oz	30 ml	3
1/16 cup	1/2 oz	15 ml	1

Temperature

FAHRENHEIT	CELSIUS
100 °F	37 °C
150 °F	65 °C
200 °F	93 °C
250 °F	121 °C
300 °F	150 °C
325 °F	160 °C
350 °F	180 °C
375 °F	190 °C
400 °F	200 °C
425 °F	220 °C
450 °F	230 °C
500 °F	260 °C
525 °F	274 °C
550 °F	288 °C

Weight

IMPERIAL	METRIC
1/2 oz	15 g
1 oz	29 g
2 oz	57 g
3 oz	85 g
4 oz	113 g
5 oz	141 g
6 oz	170 g
8 oz	227 g
10 oz	283 g
12 oz	340 g
13 oz	369 g
14 oz	397 g
15 oz	425 g
1 lb	453 g



LIQUID MEASUREMENTS

8 ounces = 1 cup	2 pints = 1 quart	4 tbsp = 1/4 cup
2 cups = 1 pint	4 quarts = 1 gallon	8 tbsp = 1/2 cup
16 ounces = 1 pint	3 tsp = 1 tbsp	1 pinch = 1/8 tsp or less
4 cups = 1 quart	2 tbsp = 1/8 cup	



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Transfer the pan to the oven and roast about 4-5 minutes or cooked to the desired degree of doneness, at least 145 degrees F.

Serve with sautéed spinach and roasted tomatoes.

Notes: You can easily skip the breading and just season the sea bass with salt and pepper. I like to drizzle a bit of olive oil and lemon juice on the fish if I am not doing a breading.

Venison Stew

Ingredients:

1 (3 pound) venison roast cut into 1½ -inch cubes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 tablespoons olive oil divided

2 onions diced

2 celery ribs finely chopped

2 cloves garlic minced

3 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon tomato paste

1 cup dry red wine or chicken broth

2 cups chicken broth

5 sprigs fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried (see note 3)

2 bay leaves

1 1/2 pounds new potatoes scrubbed and quartered

4 carrots peeled and sliced

1 cup frozen peas

Directions:

Pat venison pieces dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. In a Dutch oven or large stockpot, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium-high heat until just smoking. Add half the meat and cook in a single layer without moving until browned on one side, about 5 minutes.

Flip each piece of venison and continue cooking until browned on the other side. Transfer to a bowl. Heat another tablespoon of olive oil and repeat with remaining venison. Transfer to the bowl.

Heat the last tablespoon of olive oil until shimmering. Add onion and celery and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic until fragrant, about 30 seconds.

Stir in flour and cook until lightly browned, about 2 minutes. To the pot, add tomato paste, red wine, chicken broth, thyme, bay leaves, and browned venison with accumulated juices, scraping up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Bring to a simmer, cover, and cook for 1 hour.

Stir in potatoes and carrots. Return to a simmer, cover, and cook 1 hour longer, until venison is tender. Remove bay leaves and any thyme stems. Turn off the heat, stir in peas and cover for 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. §



It was an action packed first day of December for Capt. Larry O'Laughlin of South Bethany, DE with Johnny Moore & Scott Newlin of Dover, DE with deckhand Don Iacangelo of Ocean View, DE. They were fishing on the "Magician" out of the Indian River Marina and landed a chunky yellowfin and 3 wahoo with the largest at 68 lbs.

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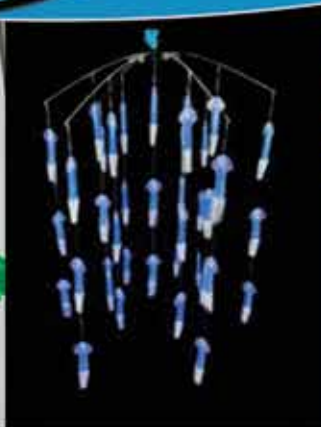


Anglers Jamie Persels, Tony Gay, Glen Jenkins and Ed Drechler kicked off November landing this 115 lb. swordfish in the Washington Canyon with Capt. John Romm on the "Pelagic Assault". Notable is that they all teamed up to hand crank this one up from the deep!

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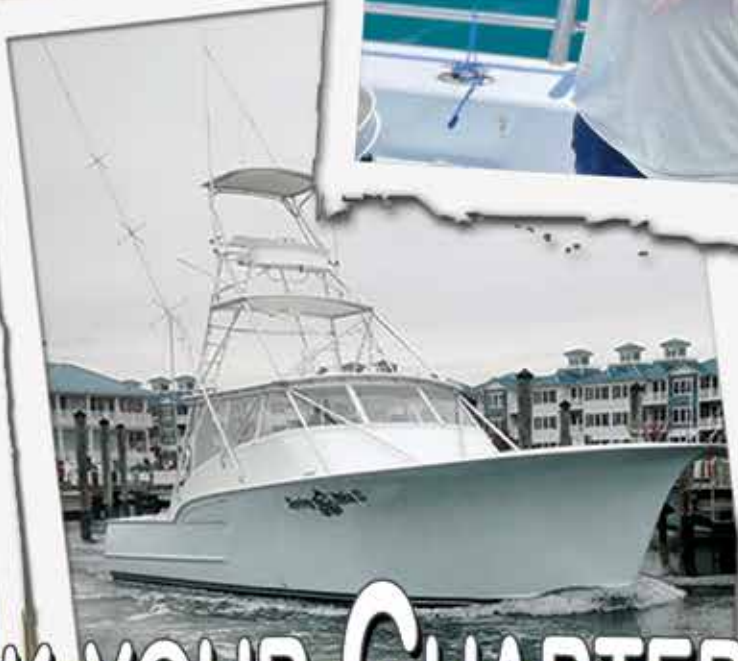
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Capt. Chris Huk on the charter boat "Restless Lady II" had a hunch there were yellowfin tuna to be had in late October. He took Sam Messina and his group out trolling between the Washington and the Norfolk Canyons putting 14 in the box and going 2 for 3 on swordfish. Pictured at the Talbot Street Pier.



Shane Boteler had a proud Dad moment in late November after taking his son Shane fishing at the Indian River Inlet. Despite the difficulty fishing the rocks, Shane pulled this fish on his first drop and caught 6 more in 2 hours!

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				B-3	B-4		C-3	C-4		D-3	D-4	E-2
	A-3	A-4	FOR SALE	B-5	B-6		C-5	C-6		D-5	D-6	E-3
	A-5	A-6		B-7	B-8		C-7	C-8	FOR SALE	D-7	D-8	E-4
FOR SALE	A-7	A-8		B-9	B-10		C-9	C-10		D-9	D-10	E-5
	A-9	A-10		B-11	B-12		C-11	C-12		D-11	D-12	E-6
	A-11	A-12	FOR SALE	B-13	B-14		C-13	C-14		D-13	D-14	E-7
	A-13	A-14		B-15	B-16		C-15	C-16		D-15	D-16	E-8
	A-15	A-16	FOR SALE	B-17	B-18		C-17	C-18		D-17	D-18	E-9
				B-19	B-20		C-19	C-20		D-19	D-20	E-10
							C-21	C-22				E-11
							C-23	C-24				E-12

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Offshore anglers got an early Christmas present as November turned to December, bluefin tuna were running just off the beach. This crew on the "Game Changer" caught their first inshore bluefin tuna at the Fenwick Shoals in just 35' of water. It hit on a Joe Shute with a ballyhoo. They also released over 16 huge rockfish who hit on ballyhoo as well! The smallest was 44"! Pictured at the Ocean City Fishing Center.

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It was a post first billfish ritual splash picture for cousins Piper Blunt of Ocean City and Tyler Hasenei from Pasadena, MD. Piper caught her first blue marlin south of the Baltimore Canyon and Tyler got his first white in the Poor Man's. They were fishing on the charter boat "Wrecker". Capt. Jeremy Blunt hooked the blue and mate Chase Porter hooked the white. They also boated 25 mahi.



Local anglers Evan Falgowski and Jacob Webb kicked off December with a trip to the rocks in the Delaware Bay. They ended up with 5 keeper tog including this fat boy.

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- Name of boat, if any

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- 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
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Identifying Delmarva Sharks

Whether or not someone is actually happy about an encounter they have with a shark, most fishermen would probably at least like to know what kind it was that they had swimming around their boat, took their bait, or stole their fish. Even among the so-called "shark experts", proper identification can be challenging and sometimes impossible if certain details are not available. Since most shark encounters are very brief, knowing how the identification process works can help folks know what to look for in the few seconds they might have to gather clues that will help them or someone else figure out what they saw.

There are at least 14-species of sharks that might be

encountered off Delmarva. No other family of fish off our coast can boast anywhere near that many members, which means that "learning your sharks" can be rather challenging for even experienced fishermen and why every year I get texts, emails, phone calls, and dockside visits from folks seeking help to identify a shark they either caught, saw, or sometimes just "heard about" from someone else who actually had the encounter. For me, it's always fun, and sometimes rather challenging, to try and put all the pieces of the puzzle together and make a reasonable identification. Naturally, good photos make the task easy, but very often the images anglers have don't show enough of the necessary details, thus requiring that other variables be considered that will

help to accurately discern one species from another. Knowing where, when, and how it was caught can help, as well as a fairly accurate estimate of size and how it reacted on the line or around the boat. Even seemingly unimportant details such as the presence of parasites, remoraras, scars, and even the relative size of a male shark's claspers can help differentiate one species from another.

Sometimes it's easy!

There are some sharks that even novice anglers can look at and know exactly what species they are from what they look like on the outside, in other words - the "morphological" characteristics. The unique appearance of a hammerhead, a thresher, and a mako make them pretty easy to distinguish from other sharks. But most species are pretty generic; brownish-gray, rounded nose, with few (if any) special features that stand out and advertise what kind of shark they are. Dusky, sandbars, blacktips, spinners, blacknose, bignose, bulls, and sharpnose can be the trickiest species to accurately identify unless you know just what to look for.

First decide what it's not.

I was once asked to help identify a species from pictures of bite marks alone. Since no one actually saw the shark, I informed the fellow asking that the only way to be certain of what it was would be from a DNA test, but since that was clearly not happening the best I could do was look at the facts and come up with the most likely candidate. The bite occurred in the surf so we could rule out mako and blue shark. The bite was the typical crescent shape and the teeth marks were evenly spaced apart and all in a

single curved line, so from that I ruled out sand tiger which, because of its teeth leaves a very ragged bite. The bite was 3 1/2 inches across so it was a relatively small shark but one that had a serious set of sharp teeth, thus eliminating a small thresher, sharpnose, as well as smooth or spiny dogfish. It was early enough in the season that I would not have expected it to be one of the species that don't typically show up until our nearshore waters warm up more than they had at the time, so I was comfortable suggesting that it was not likely a spinner, blacktip, tiger, blacknose, or hammerhead. So through the process of elimination I was down to sandbar or dusky shark, and since sandbars are very common catches in the surf and dusky not as much, I concluded that it was most likely a sandbar shark. That's one way of doing it.

Look at the fins.

Since a big part of shark identification involves eliminating species from the list of potentials, and oftentimes all you'll have to go by is a poor quality photo you took, or what you can pull from your memory bank about what features you actually observed, one key feature to pay attention to would be the shape of the tail - does it have the super long upper lobe like a thresher, or more equal size top and bottom lobes like the white, mako, and basking sharks? Look at the dorsal fin - does it have a faint black tip like a spinner or blacktip, is it tall, dark, and somewhat pointed like a hammerhead, fairly large and gray like a sandbar, midsize and brown like a dusky, or is it brown and proportionately small compared to the size of the shark like a sand tiger? Is the dorsal set forward on the body like a sandbar or blacktip, midway back like a dusky or spinner, or way back like a sand tiger? Look also at the second dorsal fin (the smaller one that's closer to the tail), is it only a little smaller than the first dorsal like the sand tiger, smooth and

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It was a mid October mixed grill trip for the boys on the "Loose Screws". Glenville, PA Travis Smith and son Tyler with Matt Miller of Hanover, PA & Jeremy Strock from New Oxford, PA headed to the Washington Canyon and reeled in a 140 lb. swordfish, 50 lb. yellowfin and harvested a 63 lb. white marlin that came up dead at the boat. The tuna and white hit on skirted ballyhoo and the sword on deep dropped squid. Pictured at the Ocean City Fishing Center.

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Ridgeback or not?

A feature that is very helpful to know is whether or not the shark has an "interdorsal ridge" which is a prominent crease in the skin running down the middle of the back between the first and second dorsal fins. Species of "ridgeback" sharks that are common off Delmarva include duskies, sandbars, tigers, and dogfish. Since none of the other prominent species off our coast have the ridge, observing the "presence" or "absence" of it allows one to immediately eliminate a number of sharks from consideration. It can be particularly helpful to know that of our local "generic" species - the spinner, blacktip, bull, sharpnose, and blacknose DO NOT have the ridge and neither do makos, hammerheads, sand tigers, blues, or threshers.

Where was it?

When asked to help identify a shark, the first thing I want to know is where it was caught or observed. Was it in the back bay, the surf, or how many miles offshore? Any shark can be anywhere at any time; We once hooked a 500 pound mako 5-miles from the inlet, caught a sand tiger 26-miles offshore, and had a huge tiger come up to the boat less than 1/2-mile out. If you know even a little about these species you're probably aware that those were very surprising encounters for those locations. Sure, it occasionally happens that sharks show up in places where they shouldn't be, but when someone tells me that they've caught a species in a place that's out of its "normal zone" I'm probably going to start off being a bit skeptical about their identification.

Frequency of catch (common or not?)

There's nothing to stop at lemon bonnethead, nurse, porbeagle, whitetip, or great hammerhead from visiting Delmarva waters,

but since the chances of encountering one is so remote, you don't want to immediately jump to the assumption that you've caught or seen something that shouldn't be here. Then again, just like other fish, shark species will sometimes expand their range into areas they haven't been before. A bunch of years ago we tagged a blacknose shark off Ocean City. When I reported it to the tagging people they questioned my identification saying that they've never had a blacknose reported above North Carolina. When they saw the photo I sent them they were surprised that it was indeed a blacknose. Since then we've been catching about 6-12 blacknose every season. Another time someone told me they thought they had caught a small bull shark in the back bay. I was very skeptical of it being a bull and assumed they had caught a small sandbar shark which are somewhat common in our bay waters. However, even though the photos were not the best, from what I could see of the shark I couldn't rule out the strong likelihood that they had indeed caught a small bull shark! By the way, bulls are still a very rare catch off Delmarva but in recent years they've been showing up with a little more frequency.

Check out those claspers!

The male sex organs of a shark are two finger-like appendages between the pelvic fins. Males have em, females don't - simple science the people seem to be losing track of these days. Before a male shark becomes sexually mature the claspers are short (barely projecting beyond the back of the pelvic fins) and very flexible. As a shark becomes sexually mature its claspers calcify and become rigid and grow longer so that they project well beyond the pelvic fins. Since most species don't mature for many years and have reached a proportionately large size, the length of the claspers can give a clue as to whether or not you're looking at a small species or one that grows quite

large. For instance, say you have a 4-foot shark with big claspers indicating a mature shark. If it's only 4-feet long and already sexually mature then it's not likely going to grow a whole lot more and, therefore, not going to be a dusky, sandbar, spinner, sand tiger or other large species of shark. It could, however, be a sharpnose, blacktip, blacknose, or dogfish. Conversely, if it's 4-feet long and its claspers indicate that it's still immature, then it won't be one of the smaller species of sharks.

Seasons

Knowing when a shark was caught can help with identification. If someone was to tell me that they caught a 3-foot shark in January I'd probably start by assuming that it was a spiny dogfish because that's one of the few small species of sharks we have around here when the water is cold. I'm always highly suspect that someone made a wrong identification when they tell

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me they encountered a certain species of shark in a month when that type is not usually found off our coast. However, just like where they should and shouldn't "be", sharks don't always stay in the water that's in a temperature range we think they prefer. So the "right" time of year is just a guideline not a rule.

Size

Someone once told me about a 25-foot white shark they had swimming around their boat. When I told them that, from what I understood, the largest white shark recorded was 20-feet long they continued to insist the one they saw was 25. Since they had no photos I had to assume that they were either grossly exaggerating the length of the shark or it was more likely a basking shark which do occasionally show up off our coast and are sometimes confused for large whites. Knowing the size of a shark can be very important to



identification. Obviously, some species just don't get as big as others. But as fishermen do tend to exaggerate a little (or a lot) you have to be careful using their estimate as a reliable clue for identification.

Study your sharks!

Obviously, in order to weave all these clues together into an accurate identification of a particular shark it's helpful to have at least some knowledge of the morphological characteristics, life history, biology, and habits of more than just a couple species that frequent our home waters. The following list highlights a few key aspects of each species that can help with identification. And if you need a little extra assistance, please feel free to visit my BigSharks.com website where you can get my contact info and also find a link to my modernsharking YouTube channel that has a lot of our shark identification videos.

Shortfin Mako *Isurus oxyrinchus* Mid May- Mid June

- 1- Open ocean species that's rarely taken closer than 20-offshore.
- 2- Very large eyes that appear totally black as if the entire eyeball is a large pupil.
- 3- Large gill openings that are proportionately larger than those found on most other sharks.
- 4- Deep blue back, silvery sides, snow-white belly, and firm, sleek, muscular physique.
- 5- Base of the tail is very wide but flat.
- 6- "Lunate" tail - top and bottom lobes are much more similar in length than that of other sharks.
- 7- Teeth are visible even with the mouth shut.
- 8- Teeth are long, thin, and NOT serrated like most other sharks.
- 9- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Longfin Mako *Isurus paucus*

- 1- Very uncommon catch.

- 2- Pectoral fins are very long and project back behind the trailing edge of the dorsal fin.
- 3- Deep dark blue (almost black) back to a dark gray on the sides and then a white underside.
- 4- Underside of the snout and lower jaw is dark gray to black.
- 5- NO Interdorsal ridge.

White (Great White) *Carcharodon carcharias* April - December

- 1- From surf-line to beyond Continental Shelf.
- 2- Large jaws with "toothy" appearance.
- 3- Teeth are triangular and serrated although in young individuals the teeth will not be as triangular.
- 4- Unlike the pretty blue/silver of a mako, the white shark's color is brown/gray on the back turning to gray/white on the sides and belly.
- 5- "Lunate" tail - top and bottom lobes are much more similar in length than that of other sharks.
- 6- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Blue - *Prionace glauca* May - November (mostly May & June)

- 1- Open ocean species that's rarely taken closer than 20-miles offshore.
- 2- Very dark blue back transitioning to a lighter blue on the sides and eventually changing to a snow-white belly.
- 3- Long pectoral fins.
- 4- Very thin and "snaky" in appearance.
- 5- Short triangular teeth that hook slightly to the side.
- 6- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Common Thresher *Alopias vulpinus* May - October

- 1- Most common species of thresher taken off Delmarva
- 2- From surf-line to edge of Continental shelf.
- 3- Deep blue and purple back, silver sides and white belly.
- 4- The top lobe of the thresher's tail is as long as the entire body of the fish itself.
- 5- Small mouth and very small



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Bigeye Thresher
Alopias superciliosus

- 1- Very uncommon catch.
- 2- 1st dorsal fin set very far back.
- 3- Deep helmet-like grooves makes a "V" shape over top of head and gills.
- 4- Large eyes angled upward.
- 6- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Spinner
Carcharhinus brevipinna
Late June - September

- 1- Grayish bronze in color with a white belly.
- 2- Adults will usually display a Z-shaped swath of white and gray on each side. Snout appears less rounded than that of the dusky, sandbar, and bull.
- 3- Prominent black tip on the "anal fin" (last fin on the underside of the shark before tail).
- 4- Total length of about nine-feet.
- 5- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Blacktip
Carcharhinus limbatus
June - October

- 1- From surf-line out 60-miles.
- 2- Grayish bronze in color with a white belly.
- 3- Adults will usually display a conspicuous Z-shaped swath of white and gray on each side. Snout appears less rounded than that of the dusky, sandbar, and bull.
- 4- Total length is rarely over 6-feet.
- 5- "Husky in the shoulder area.
- 6- Lacks any black marking on the "anal fin" (last fin on the underside of the shark before tail).
- 6- Black-tips on fins might fade as the shark matures and sometimes are not evident at all.
- 7- Dermal denticles are often sloughing off around the base of the dorsal fin and on the back leaving an appearance of scarring and a loose-sand-like feel to the touch.
- 8- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Spinner or Blacktip?

A profile view of the two sharks will show that a spinner's head from the tip of the nose to the back of it's mouth is very sleek and almost looks as though it was squashed down to make it more streamlined.

The first dorsal fin on a spinner is farther back on the body than on a blacktip.

Spinners have black-tips on all fins including the bottom lobe of the tail AND on the "anal fin" which is the last fin on the underside of the shark before its tail. Blacktips lack the black tip on the anal fin.


Atlantic Sharpnose
Rhizoprionodon terraenovae

- 1- July through September.
- 2- Nearshore waters.
- 3- Small species of less than four feet and weigh under 15-pounds, most 5-10 pounds.
- 4- Distinctive white splotchy dots across their bronze back and sides.
- 5- Obvious white fringe along the trailing edge of the pectoral fins.
- 6- Teeth angle to the sides of the jaw.
- 7- Almost all will be male.
- 8- NO Interdorsal ridge

Tiger
Geleocerdo cuvier
June - October

- 1- May be taken from 3-14 feet long (TL) (20-pounds to over 1000-pounds).
- 2- Mostly from 15-miles out to beyond the Continental Shelf but occasionally much closer to shore.
- 3- Stripe-like markings, that tend to fade in older animals.
- 4- Huge head and shoulder area followed by a sharply tapering back-half.
- 5- Very thick and coarse skin.
- 6- Thin layer slime over much of the skin.
- 7- Very wide head and body that tapers aggressively to the tail.

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8- Top lobe of tail tapers to very thin tip.

9- Exceptionally large jaw with unique serrated teeth that hook sharply to the sides.

10- Interdorsal ridge.

Dusky
Carcharhinus obscurus
June - October

1- Surf-line out to beyond the Continental Shelf.

2- Most are taken within 10-miles of coast.

3- Grow to 12-feet but most taken are under 5-feet.

4- Gray/brown back, white belly.

5- Front of dorsal fin behind pectoral fins.

6- Skin is very slick (actually slimy) when felt from head to tail but very coarse from tail to head.

7- Rounded nose.

8- Serrated & triangular teeth on top, with thin straight teeth on bottom.

9- Usually exhibit clusters of little round pea-size scars from the first dorsal fin to tail.

10- Often confused with the sandbar shark.

11- Very common catch from boats and in the surf.

12- Interdorsal ridge.

Sandbar
Carcharhinus plumbeus
May - October

1- Surf-line to edge of Continental Shelf.

2- Sandbars will vary in color from bronze/gray to mostly gray.

3- Will grow to 7-feet (TL) but many caught under 2-5 feet (TL).

4- Large dorsal and pectoral fins.

5- Front of dorsal fin over pectoral fin.

6- Serrated & triangular teeth on top, with thin straight teeth on bottom.

7- Very common catch from boats and in the surf.

8- Interdorsal ridge.

Dusky or Sandbar?

The most definitive trait that

distinguishes duskies from sandbars is the location of the first dorsal fin. On a sandbar shark if you were to draw a line from where the front edge of the dorsal fin connects to the body straight down the side of the shark to the belly, it would hit about the middle of the pectoral fin. Do the same to a dusky shark and the line would miss or just barely touch the very back edge of the pectoral fin. Also, a sandbar's first dorsal fin is proportionately much larger than that on a dusky, and a sandbar typically has a greater girth up in the shoulder area. Color is not usually a good thing to use for identification because within a species the color of individual animals can vary a bit. But usually duskies tend to be more of a dark brown in color while sandbars will be gray or a gray/bronze. These color schemes tend to make the sandbar overall much lighter in color than the dusky.

On duskies, one can sometimes notice clusters of small pea size scars on the back. Most, but not all, duskies will exhibit these scars which are seldom seen on sandbar sharks. Finally, the skin is very different between the two species. A dusky is covered by minutely small and sharp overlapping dermal denticles and a thin layer of slime. Run a hand from head to tail down a dusky and it will feel slimy and very smooth, go the other way and it will be slimy but very rough. Do the same with a sandbar shark and it will feel coarse in either direction because the skin consists of blunt non-overlapping denticles and there is no slime.

Scalloped Hammerhead
Sphyrna lewini
June - October

1- Mostly 15-miles out to beyond Continental Shelf but small ones much closer to shore.

2- No longer a common catch as it was in past years.

3- Usually caught from 80-150 pounds though occasionally over 200.

4- Color can vary from olive to bronze/gray to all bronze.

5- Leading edge of the head has a depression or "scallop-out" area directly in the center.

6- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Smooth Hammerhead
Sphyrna zygaena
June - October

1- Surf-line to beyond Continental Shelf.

2- Most common HH species taken off Delmarva.

3- Will grow to 13-feet (TL) but most caught will be under 6-feet (TL).

4- Weight range from less than 10-pounds to over 200. Usually 20-80 pounds.

5- Dark olive/gray color.

6- Often have a thin layer of black slime on skin.

7- Center of the head is "smooth" and not indented as in other hammerheads.

8- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Great Hammerhead
Sphyrna mokarran
June - November

1- Will grow to over 18-feet and can weigh over 1200-pounds.

2- Not a common HH off Delmarva.

3- Most likely to be taken beyond the edge of the Continental Shelf.

4- Head is straight, not curved back slightly like the other species of H-Head.

5- First dorsal fin of a great hammerhead is extra tall and the trailing edge of it curves back in a sickle-shape.

6- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Sand Tiger
Carcharias Taurus
June - October

1- Surf-line out to 15-miles.

2- Up to 10-feet (TL) rarely under 5-feet (TL)

3- Small eyes.

4- Rough brown/gray and blotchy skin.

5- Short fins, First and second dorsal fin similar in size.

6- Long thin teeth with small "cusplets" on either side.

7- Teeth can be seen even when its jaws are closed.

8- Very common catch from boats and in the surf.

9- NO Interdorsal ridge.

Spiny Dogfish
Squalus acanthias
October - May.

1- Will grow to about 4-foot but most are caught under three.

2- Brownish gray with a small white spots on the back and sides.

3- Very small but sharp teeth.

4- Rounded top lobe of tail.

5- One inch-long (or longer) spines in front of each of the two dorsal fins.

6- Interdorsal ridge (faint).

Smooth Dogfish
(Sand Shark)
Mustelus canis
May-November

1- From surf line out 20-miles

2- Will grow to about 5-feet but most are caught under 3-feet.

3- Small mouth with many very blunt teeth.

4- Oval shaped eyes.

5- Very common catch from boats and in the surf.

6- Interdorsal ridge.

Bull
Carcharinus leucas
June - October

1- Most likely to be caught in nearshore waters.

2- Lengths to 11-feet but usually under 8-feet.

3- Large mouth

4- Husky body (large girth)

5- Dorsal fin is relatively low and very triangular.

6- NO Interdorsal ridge.

7- Very uncommon catch.

Blacknose
Carcharinus acronotus
July-September

1- Uncommon catch.

2- Will grow to about 4-feet.

3- Black tip on snout is not always present

4- One of the few 4-foot sharks in this area that the males will be mature.

5- NO Interdorsal ridge. §

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Brian Brannan set a new personal best for himself catching a 23” flounder on an ocean structure. He also fooled a 21 incher using orange Gulp on a flounder rig. He was fishing on the “Break a Leg” with Mike Ahlfeldt and Derek Crossley.















Three generations of the Milanese family took to water to fish the Indian River Inlet in late November. Young Madison & Allie from Lutherville, MD hooked up with these two sharks at the same time, the largest at 28”. They were fishing on the “Reel Salty” with father & Capt. Michael and grandfather Nino.

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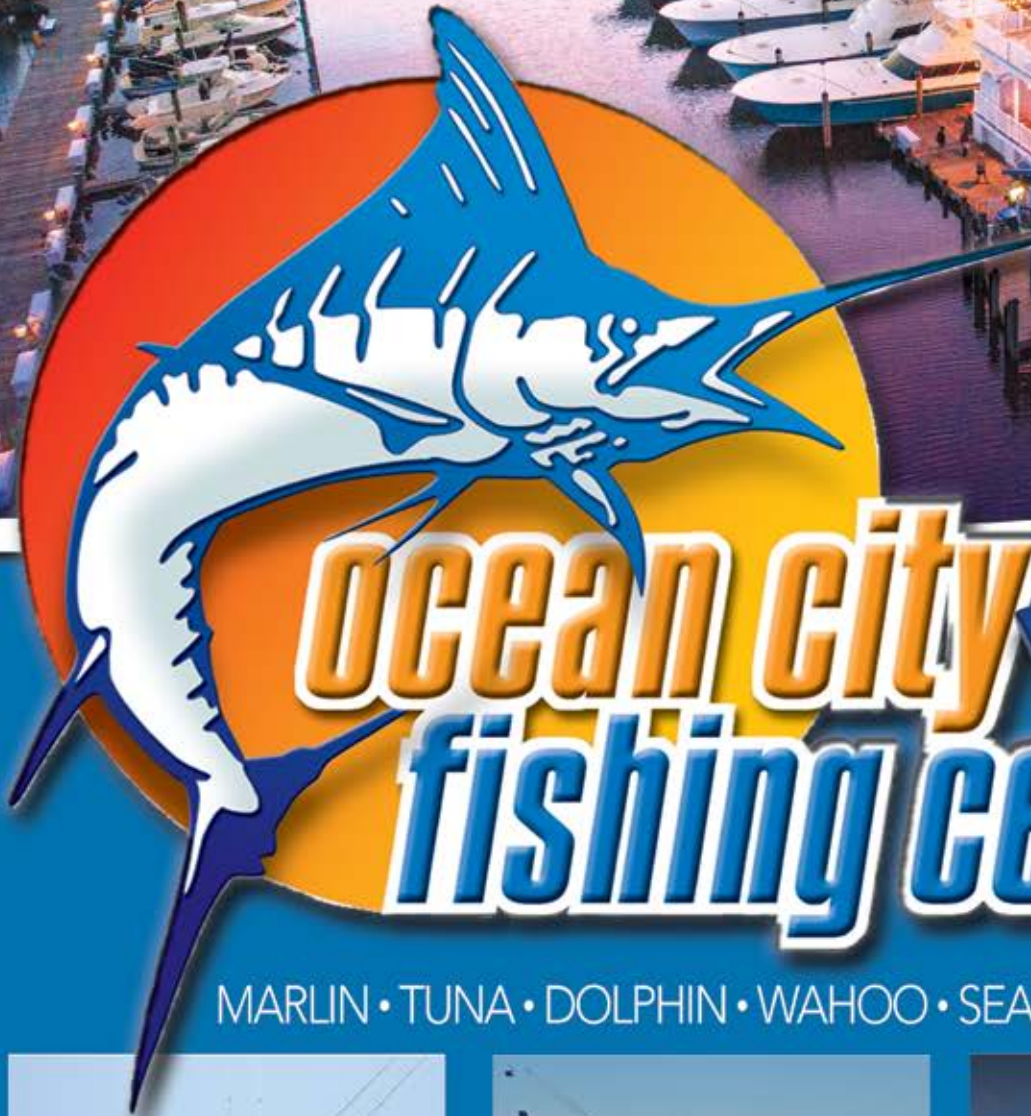
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MARYLAND STATE RECORDS

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>ANGLER</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
ATLANTIC COD	24.0 LBS.	FRED BRUNGART	5/31/2013	38 MI. S.E. OCEAN CITY INLET
ATLANTIC SPADEFISH	11.4 LBS.	NOEL LOHR	9/2/2004	TRIPLE WRECKS
ATLANTIC TRIPLETAIL	11.0 LBS.	DON WHITTINGTON	10/19/2019	BALTIMORE CANYON
BARRACUDA, GREAT	13 LBS.	STEPHEN HUMPHREY	10/06/2023	WASHINGTON CANYON
BIG-SCALE POMFRET	22.1 LBS.	JEFF ROSENKILDE	12/28/2019	NORFOLK CANYON
BLACK SEABASS	8.0 LBS.	HAYWARD MADISON	6/1/1978	JACKSPOT
BLUEFISH	23.5 LBS.	LILLIAN MORRIS	10/30/1974	ASSATEAGUE ISLAND
COBIA	94.6 LBS.	EMMA ZAJDEL	6/30/2016	LITTLE GULL SHOAL
DOLPHIN	74.5 LBS.	KRISTY FRASHURE	8/16/2019	POOR MAN'S CANYON
DRUM, BLACK	79.0 LBS.	STANLEY ILYES	9/7/1985	BASS GROUNDS
DRUM, RED	70.0 LBS.	ROBERT LIGHT	9/24/1977	ASSATEAGUE ISLAND
FALSE ALBACORE	22.5 LBS.	KEVIN SHECKELLS	6/25/1995	THIRD LUMP
FLOUNDER, SUMMER	17.0 LBS.	ANTHONY VACARI	10/3/1974	ASSATEAGUE ISLAND
FLOUNDER, WINTER	5.1 LBS.	KEVIN TWILLEY	6/23/2015	26 MI. EAST OF OCEAN CITY
GRAY TRIGGERFISH	6.0 LBS.	LOGAN LIDDICK	9/25/2020	OCEAN CITY
KING MACKEREL	47.0 LBS.	GERALD KAUFFMAN	10/18/1985	GREAT GULL SHOALS
KINGFISH	2.5 LBS.	GRACE WALKER	10/1/1975	ASSATEAGUE ISLAND
MARLIN, BLUE	1,135 LBS.	BILLY GERLACH	8/20/2021	WASHINGTON CANYON
POMPANO, DOLPHINFISH	2 LBS.	CHRIS STAFFORD	9/20/2023	POOR MAN'S CANYON
PORGY	6.2 LBS.	PEARL HOPPLE	7/4/1966	FENWICK SHOAL
SHEEPSHEAD	18.0 LBS.	ROBERT MARTIN	9/22/2017	OCEAN CITY INLET
SNOWY GROUPE	66.0 LBS.	GREGORY BENN	7/30/2012	NORFOLK CANYON
STRIPED BASS	57.2 LBS.	GARY SMITH	5/6/2006	ASSATEAGUE ISLAND
SWORDFISH	393.0 LBS.	JEFF JACOBS	9/23/2022	WASHINGTON CANYON
TAUTOG	28.8 LBS.	KENNETH WESTERFELD	1/2/2015	OCEAN CITY
TILEFISH, BLUELINE	20.0 LBS.	ROBERT PURCELL	9/12/2012	NORFOLK CANYON
TILEFISH, GOLDEN	62.0 LBS.	STEVE DOCTOR	10/22/2009	BALTIMORE CANYON
TUNA, BIGEYE	375.5 LBS.	CECIL BROWNE	8/26/1977	OCEAN CITY
TUNA, BLACKFIN	32.0 LBS.	BOB ZANG	9/20/1998	30 FATHOM LINE
TUNA, BLUEFIN	625.0 LBS.	JAMES DANIELS, IV	8/3/1975	45 MI. EAST OF OCEAN CITY
TUNA, LONGFIN	77.0 LBS.	THOMAS BOOMER	9/20/2022	800 SQUARE
TUNA, YELLOWFIN	236.5 LBS.	MARK BENNETT	9/22/2002	WASHINGTON CANYON
WAHOO	131.0 LBS.	JOHN SCHAAR	6/30/2014	ROCKPILE
WHITE MARLIN	135.0 LBS.	GEORGE PIERSON	8/29/1980	POOR MAN'S CANYON
WHITE PERCH	1.85 LBS.	ROBERT HUDSON	4/28/2022	ISLE OF WIGHT BAY
<u>SHARKS</u>				
BLACK TIP	193.0 LBS.	BRIAN ZYSK	8/4/1991	OCEAN CITY
BLUE	280.0 LBS.	MARTIN WALTMAN	9/13/1997	OCEAN CITY
DOGFISH, SMOOTH	18 LBS.	FAY GANSTER	10/22/2022	ISLE OF WIGHT SHOALS
HAMMERHEAD, SCALLOPED	266.5 LBS.	SCOTT CUSICK	8/8/2012	WASHINGTON CANYON
HAMMERHEAD, SMOOTH	375.0 LBS.	GEORGE WILSON FORD V	6/17/2004	PARKING LOT
MAKO	876.0 LBS.	JIM HUGHES	6/20/2009	POORMANS CANYON
THRESHER	642.0 LBS.	BRENT APPLIGIT	6/19/2009	THE FINGERS
TIGER	1,210.0 LBS.	GRACE CZERNIAK	7/9/1983	OCEAN CITY

Note: All Atlantic Coast records recognized as of December 22, 2023



The charter boat "Bill Slayer" took full advantage of the mid October wahoo run catching 27 in less than 10 days. All within 50 miles from shore. This trip with Ed B. and his family were on their last trip of 2023 and had 17 bites overall with 5 coming tight on pink Nomad Tackle DTX.



Doug Price shared a beautiful 22.5" sheepshead he caught around Smith Island off the ESVA. He was night fishing on the "REELAX II" and used soft crab and cut bait to catch this convict.

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Leanne & Paige Renkles cleaned up on spanish mackerel using Clark Spoons at the Fenwick Shoals in late September. They were fishing on the “Gone Coastal” out of Keenwick West, DE.



Cold & rain did not stop Philip Lewis, Erika Hurley, Erika Ehinger, Terrin Mitchell and Chris Mitchell from the hot early December bluefin bite. They were fishing with Capt. Kurt Howell and mate Ricky Atkins with 2nd mate Phil Knapp on the charter boat “Game Changer”. Pictured at the Ocean City Fishing Center.

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Capt. Pete Doran – "Capt. B.C." & Capt. John Galvin – "El Diablo"

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It was an awesome early October day for anglers Terry Anderson, Joey Warren, Ryder Warren, Chess Hedrick and Chris Huk on the charter boat "Bill Slayer". Capt. Chris Ragni with mate Niko Dias had the group trolling a temperature break inshore of the Baltimore Canyon where they had 20 wahoo bites landing 10 of the 14 that came tight. Nomad Deep Diving Plugs did the trick for the speedsters, and skirted ballyhoo got 2 yellowfins in the box. Pictured at the Indian River Marina.




The flounder were still biting all the way through October at the Oceanic Fishing Pier in OC. Woody fooled this 23" and almost 5 lb. flounder using squid and minnows on the 22nd.



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12 year old Lillyan Charvat shares a nice smile with this 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ " flounder she caught in the East Channel using a $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Loaded Tube lure from Rumblefishing.



Dawn and Lauryn Head were lucky charms for Tom Head on this trip to the Outer Wall. Dawn's blackfish was 18" and Lauryn's was a tad bigger at 20". Pictured at Lewes Harbour Marina.

6TH ANNUAL KAYAK FISHING TOURNAMENT

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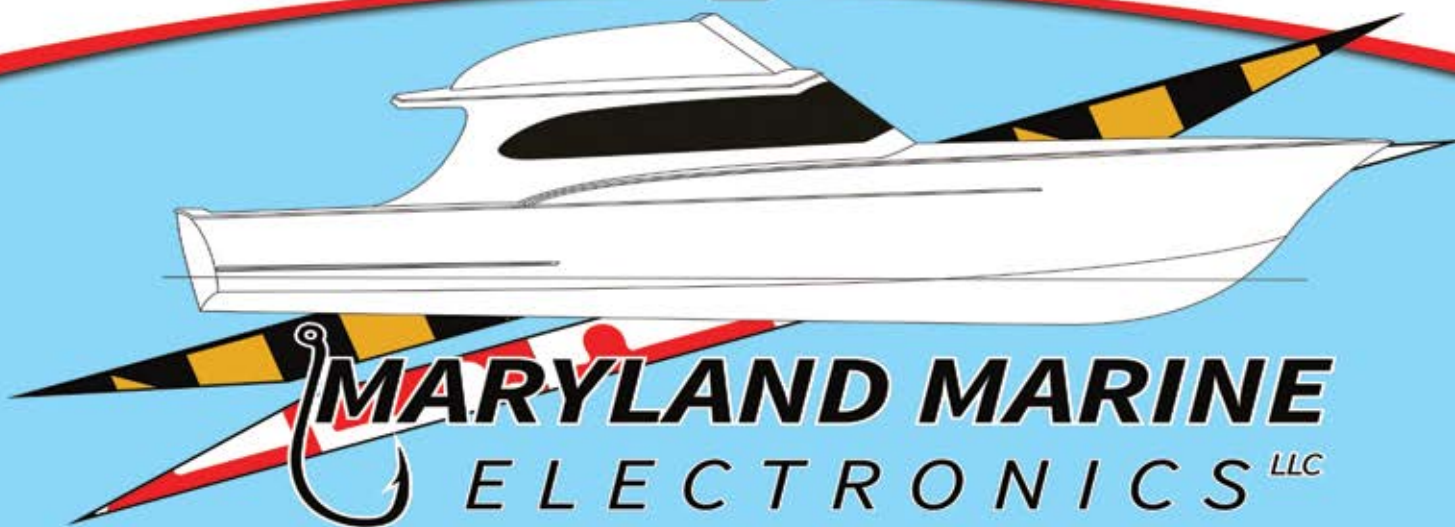
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Local boys Jake Pilkerton, Tanner Virden, "Restless Lady II" Capt. Chris Huk and Joey Snight headed down south to Marathon in the Florida Keys and caught this beauty of a swordfish as well as some gorgeous weather.

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It was an insane November marlin fishing trip to Magdalana Bay in Baha Mexico for Edward Barr, Kourtney Duffie, Camila Ingram, Sarah Evans, Lindsay Harrington and Sebastian Leon. It was some of the best fishing they have ever experienced.



The charter boat “Spring Mix II” had a great mahi catch for their last charter of the season in October. Capt. Chris Watkowski with mate Chase Porter had this three generation team of grandfather, father and son working the shoals boating 2 wahoo and over 40 mahi.



It was a limit catch of cobia for Adrian Lillquest, Josh Soper and Connor Lillquest during the hot October bite. Two weighted 60 lbs. and the other 50 lbs. They were fishing on Joe Milmo’s 23’ Parker just east of the Hot Dog. Pictured at Hookem & Cookem at the Indian River Marina.



SOUTH JERSEY TOURNAMENTS 2024

EVENT CALENDAR

 <h3>SCHOOL'S OUT TUNA TOURNAMENT</h3> <p>JUNE 19-23</p>	 <h3>MIDATLANTIC CUP BLUE MARLIN TOURNAMENT</h3> <p>JULY 4</p>
 <h3>SOUTH JERSEY YACHT SALES OFFSHORE SHOWDOWN</h3> <p>JULY 10-13</p>	 <h3>CAPE MAY MARLIN TOURNAMENT</h3> <p>JULY 25-28</p>
 <h2>THE MIDATLANTIC TOURNAMENT</h2> <p>AUGUST 18-23</p>	

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Brian Reynolds of Berlin made a run on his boat "Baitwatch" from the West Ocean City boat ramp to the bay side of the south Ocean City Jetty and hooked into some nice fish. The two sheephead at 18¾" and 17" as well as the 17" black drum were all caught on sandfleas.

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The Isle of Wight Shoal was the place to be for the early December inshore bluefin tuna run! Mike Faust, Robbie Baxley, Jim Bunting and Jeff Ferguson caught this 57" and 111 lb. blue there as well as another chunky one a few days later. Pictured at Lewes Harbour Marina.

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Otto and Koen Schlicht of Ocean City had an amazing night on the Rt 50 Bridge in mid November. They landed and released this 48" striper on a Storm Lure.



Another big inshore bluefin tuna catch was made by Ben Nichols of Ellicott City, MD. He caught this 145 pounder on December 2nd. Weighed and pictured at Lewes Harbour Marina.



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2024 TOURNAMENT SERIES



45th ANNUAL SMALL BOAT TOURNAMENT

Chairmen: Colin Campbell, Boz Jefferson & Tom Ottenwaelder

Registration: June 21 @ 6:30-8:00pm

Fishing Days: (1 of 2) June 22 & 23

Weigh Ins: June 22 & 23, 3:00-6:30 p.m.,
Sunset Marina

Fish In-shore or Off-shore Divisions or Both

Awards: June 23, 2024 @ OCMC Clubhouse

42nd ANNUAL CANYON KICK OFF

Chairmen: Bob Althausen & Yanni Harris

In-Person Registration: July 3 from 6:30-8:00pm

Additional Registrations taken until
6pm, July 4, 2024

FREE TO PAID OCMC BOAT MEMBERS

Fishing Days: (2 of 3) July 5, 6 & 7, 2024

Weigh Ins: July 5, 6 & 7, 5:00-7:30 pm @
Sunset Marina

Awards: July 7, 2024 @ OCMC Clubhouse

20th ANNUAL KID'S CLASSIC

To benefit the Wish-A-Fish Foundation

OCMC Chairmen: Dale Withers, Brendan
Hanley WAF Chairmen: Pam & Mark Hess,
Ryan Freese

Registration: July 19 @ 6:00-8:00 pm

Fishing Days: (1 or 2 of 2) July 20 & 21

Weigh Ins: July 20 3:00-6:30 p.m., July 21
3:00-6:00 p.m., Sunset Marina

Entertainment: July 21, 2024 @ OCMC
Clubhouse

16th ANNUAL FRANKY PETTOLINA OCMC LADIES' TOURNAMENT "HEELS & REELS"

*To benefit the Marlin Club Crew of
OC Scholarship Fund*

Chairmen: Ryan Freese & Kayvon Bahrami

Registration: August 1 @ 6:00-8:00 pm

Fishing Days: (1 of 2) August 2 & 3

Weigh-Ins: August 2 & 3, 5:30-7:30 pm @
Atlantic Tackle

Awards: August 3, 2024 @ OCMC Clubhouse

9th ANNUAL OCMC VS OCLTC SHOOT-OUT

Chairmen: Pat Svehla & Frank Goodhart III

Tournament Date: TBD

Angler Meeting: TBD

Location: TBD No weigh-ins.

66th ANNUAL LABOR DAY WHITE MARLIN TOURNAMENT

Chairmen: Jim Giles & Gary Stamm

Tournament Information: TBD

44th ANNUAL CHARLES KRATZ & SCOTT SMITH CHALLENGE CUP

Chairmen: Andy Helms & Bob Althausen

Tournament Information: TBD

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2024 TOURNAMENT DATES:

- Seasonal Awards start January 1, 2024 and end on October 1, 2024 at 5:00pm
- All catch reports must be filed no later than 4:00pm on October 2, 2024
- Questions, please email: info@ocmarlinclub.com or call 410-213-1613



Congratulates all 2023 OC Marlin Club

AWARD WINNERS!

Top Junior Angler
Colt Duffie - 28

Top Lady Angler
Judith Duffie - 13

Top Gentleman Angler
Ed Dunn - 42

**1st White Marlin Caught
by a Junior Angler**
Chase Groff / Ready or Not
6/30/2022 @1:29 am

Top Recreational Angler Award
Christy Keller - 16

Heaviest Tuna
"Talkin Trash" 253 lbs.

Heaviest Dolphin
"Boss Hogg" 65 lbs.

Heaviest Wahoo
"Dawg Haus" 56 lbs.

Most Swordfish Released by any Boat
"Primary Search" - 4

1st White Marlin of the Season
Crew / Bill Slayer
6/7/23 @8:37 am

Most First Billfish - Charter Boat
"Talkin Trash" - 11

Most First Billfish - Private Boat
"Kilo Charlie" - 36

1st Blue Marlin of the Season
Steve Sylvester / Talkin Trash
6/1/2023 @11:38 am

Most Blue Marlin Released - Private Boat
"Christine Marie" - 8

Most Blue Marlin Released - Charter Boat
"Reel Chaos" - 9

Most Billfish Released - Any Boat
"Billfisher" - 123

Most Billfish Released - Charter Boat
"Roll Groove" - 66

Most Billfish Released - Private Boat
"Billfisher" - 123

Most Billfish Released - 39'-48' Boat
"Fish On" - 52

Most Billfish Released - 29'-38' Boat
"Fish Whistle" - 19

Most Billfish Released - 28' and Under Boat
"Sea Hunt" - 7

Most Billfish Caught - 28' & Under
"Sea Hunt 26" - 3

Most Tuna Caught in 2023 - Charter Boat
"Marli" - 219
"Talkin Trash" - 213
"Boss Hogg" - 194

Most Tuna Caught in 2023 - Private Boat
"Full Service" - 67
"Kilo Charlie" - 45
"Just One More" - 45

Most Tuna Caught - 39' - 48' Boat
"Bill Slayer" - 149
"Fish On" - 113
"Full Service" - 67

Most Tuna Caught - 29' - 38' Boat
"Just One More" - 45
"Hocus Pocus" - 28
"Hot Lick" - 25

Most Tuna Caught - 28' & Under Boat
"Clickbait" - 10
"Sea Hunt 27" - 4
"Team Wallhangers" - 3

**Top 10
Most Billfish Released -
1 Day by a Charter Boat**

Tighten Up - 10
Tighten Up - 9
Fish On - 8
Blood Money - 7
Big Stick - 7
Fish On - 7
Boss Hogg - 7
Roll Groove - 7
Boss Hogg - 6
Reel Chaos - 6

**Top 10
Most Billfish Released -
1 Day by a Private Boat**

Billfisher - 15
Floor Reel - 13
D.A.Sea - 12
Billfisher - 10
Billfisher - 9
Billfisher - 8
Maverick - 7
Kilo Charlie - 7
Reel Joy - 7



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Club**

50 Club

25 Club

100 Club Billfisher

Kilo Charlie Roll Groove Christine Marie D.A. SEA
Tighten Up Boss Hogg Fish On
Reel Chaos Reel Joy Big Stick C-Boys
Blood Money First Light



It took a lot of hands to hold all the awards for the Duffie family and the "Billfisher" during the 2023 Ocean City Marlin Club seasonal awards! Judith Duffie, Jonathan Duffie, Capt. Jon Duffie, Capt. Noah McVicker, Kourtney Duffie, Ellison Thomas and Colt Duffie are shown holding trophies for; Most Billfish Released (123), Top Lady Angler (Judith-13), Top Junior Angler (Colt-28), 3rd Place Gentleman Angler (Jonathan-13), Most Billfish by a Private Boat (123), Most Billfish in One Day (in 5 of the top 10 with single day totals of 15, 10, 9, 8, 7), and 2nd Most Blue Marlin Released by a Private Boat (6). Just wow!



The charter boat "Roll Grove" had a strong 2023 season. Here Leslie & Darren Helwig, Josh Shelton, Capt. Danny Prettyman, mate Tucker Stetson and Eddie Kehl are shown accepting an award for Most Billfish by a Charter Boat (66) from the Ocean City Marlin Club during their Seasonal Awards. Their boat was also recognized for 3rd Place for Most Billfish Released by Any Boat (66), 2nd Place Top Gentleman Angler (Darren-36), catching the Last White Marlin of the Season and for being in the Top 10 Most Billfish Released in a Day Category with 7.



Capt. Mark Hoos, Jax Moore, Jake Pinkerton, and Jake's son Westin of the charter boat "Marli" accept the Ocean City Marlin Club's Seasonal Award for Most Tuna Caught by a Charter Boat (219). This is the 19th year the "Marli" has topped this category!



The private boat "Full Service" kicked off 2023 by catching the first bigeye tuna of the season in early May and finished the year earning the Most Tuna Caught by a Private Boat (67) at the Ocean City Marlin Club's Seasonal Awards. Capt. Jim Barbey is shown here with his wife Marlene accepting the award.



Capt. Chris Little of the charter boat "Talkin' Trash" is shown with Tammy Little and mate Jacob Bialk accepting their award at the Ocean City Marlin Club's Seasonal Awards for Heaviest Tuna of 2023 at 253 lbs. They also took home trophies for catching the 1st Blue Marlin of the Season, 2nd Place for the Most Tuna Caught by a Charter Boat (213), 3rd Place for releasing the Most Blue Marlin (5) and 1st Place for Most First Billfish Caught by a Charter Boat (11).

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The first white marlin caught each season is highly anticipated and can earn money! This year for the Ocean City Marlin Club that honor went to the charter boat "Bill Slayer". Mate Niko Dias accepts the \$5,000 award since Capt. Chris Ragni was busy getting married!



The crew of the charter boat "Primary Search" received a brand new award from the Ocean City Marlin Club for Most Swordfish Caught for the season. A very cool trophy if you have a chance to see it. Pictured are Capt. Austin Ensor with Brian Suschke and Joe Tight.



Chris Kinsley, Scott Dolmetsch, Capt. Howard Lynch and mate Burro Gonzales of the private boat "Kilo Charlie" were recognized several times during the Ocean City Marlin Clubs Seasonal Awards. This one was for Most First Billfish Caught by a Private Boat (36). They also took home hardware for 2nd Place for Most Billfish Released by Any Boat as well as a Private Boat (66), 3rd Place Most Blue Marlin Caught by a Private Boat (5), 2nd Most Tuna Caught by a Private Boat (45) and were in the Top 10 Single Day Billfish Release with 7.



Capt. Brian Porter of the charter boat "Boss Hogg" accepts the Ocean City Marlin Club Seasonal award for the Heaviest Dolphin in 2023 at 65 lbs. In addition the "Boss Hogg" took honors for 3rd Place Most Billfish by a Charter Boat (53), 3rd Place for Most Tuna Caught by a Charter Boat (194), 3rd Place for Heaviest Tuna (245 lbs.) and for taking 2 spots in the Top 10 Billfish Released in a Single Day (7 & 6).



Judith Duffie with her Ocean City Marlin Club Seasonal Award trophy for being the Top Lady Angler for her 13 billfish catches in 2023.

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Colt Duffie crushed the Junior Angler Division of the Ocean City Marlin Club's Season Awards releasing a total of 28 marlin in 2023! He is pictured here with club President Ryan Freese.



Certainly one of the best dressed award recipients during the Ocean City Marlin Club's Season Awards was young Addison Lane. She won 2nd place in the Junior Angler Division for her total of 9 billfish caught in 2023!



The private boat "Christine Marie" took top honors at the Ocean City Marlin Club's Season Awards for the Most Blue Marlin Caught by a Private Boat (8). Christine Summers holds the trophy and is surrounded by Parker Marshall and Steve Summers.



Capt. Anthony Matarese with mate Wyatt Melocik of the charter boat "Reel Chaos" accept the award for Most Blue Marlin Caught by a Charter Boat (9) during the Ocean City Marlin Club's Seasonal Awards.



The Top Mate Billfish of the Year for the Ocean City Marlin Club for a Charter Boat was Tucker Stetson for his work on the "Roll Groove".



Ellison Thomas earned the award for Top Mate Billfish for 2023 from the Ocean City Marlin Club for his work on the "Billfisher".

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2023 **TOG TOURNAMENT**



Phillip Bandy did not waste any time loading up the leaderboard during the Lewes Harbor Marina's month long Tautog Tournament this fall! He put this 19 lb. tog on the scales on the 2nd day of the event to jump into 1st Place where he denied all challengers for the remainder of the event.



Angler Ben Cavaliere would not give up during the Lewes Harbour Fall Tautog Tournament that runs from mid November to mid December. He posted a 3rd Place fish on November 21st, but that was not good enough, so he headed back out with Capt. Carey Evans on the charter boat "Grizzly" where he caught this 10.51 pounder to secure 2nd Place for the tournament.

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Capt. Brent Wiest of the charter boat "Katydid" is no stranger to big tog. He held the DE state record until this year, so it is no surprise he would be in the top three during the Lewes Harbour Winter Tautog Tournament. He caught this 10.26 lb. blackfish at an ocean structure in 55' of water. His charter anglers also caught their limits up to 7 lbs.

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DELAWARE STATE RECORDS

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>ANGLER</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
BLUEFISH	24.8 LBS.	LUIS MISPIRETA	11/16/2015	DEL-JERSEY-LAND REEF
COBIA	89.2 LBS.	SCOTT BROOKS	7/15/2022	FENWICK SHOAL
CROAKER	5 LB. 3.5 OZ.	CATHERINE SIMPSON	9/12/1980	INDIAN RIVER
DOLPHIN	56 LB. 9 OZ.	BUTCH EMMERTT	7/6/2014	BALTIMORE CANYON
DRUM, BLACK	115 LBS.	KENNETH SMITH	5/20/1978	DELAWARE BAY
DRUM, RED	75 LBS.	JAMES VANDETTI	6/15/1976	UNKNOWN
FLOUNDER, SUMMER	17 LB. 15 OZ.	WILLIAM KENDALL	10/07/1974	INDIAN RIVER INLET
FLOUNDER, WINTER	NO CLASSIFICATION			
KINGFISH, ROUNDHEAD	4 LBS.	BILLY HASTINGS	10/13/1973	BETHANY BEACH
MACKEREL, KING	52 LB. 11.2 OZ.	JEFF MCCOY	6/20/2023	FENWICK SHOALS
MACKEREL, SPANISH	6 LB. 4 OZ.	ERIC LUDWIG	8/06/2000	LIGHT SHIP
MARLIN, BLUE	820.0 LBS.	BRUCE KING	7/8/1986	POORMAN'S CANYON
MARLIN, WHITE	120.0 LBS.	WILLIAM GARNER JR.	9/25/1972	BALTIMORE CANYON
PORGY	5 LB. 5 OZ.	HERMAN SCHMIDT	5/31/1979	NOT RECORDED
SEABASS	7 LB. 6 OZ.	STEVE SAMLUK	9/09/1988	FENWICK SHOAL
SHEEPSHEAD	17 LB. 1 OZ.	DAVE WALKER	9/30/2014	DELAWARE BAY REEFSITE
SPADEFISH	NO CLASSIFICATION			
STRIPED BASS	52 LBS.	BEN SMITH	12/08/2012	SURF AT 3R'S ROAD
SWORDFISH	358 LBS.	KURT LORENZ	1978	POORMAN'S CANYON
TAUTOG	22 LBS. 14.4 OZ.	JAMES MILANO	5/6/2023	OCEAN STRUCTURE
TILEFISH, BLUELINE	25.5 LBS.	DAINE HURSH	8/27/2022	ATLANTIC OCEAN
TILEFISH, GOLDEN	52.0 LB. 12.8 OZ.	DYLAN BAKER	8/25/2017	BALTIMORE CANYON
TRIGGERFISH, GRAY	6.34 LBS.	BUDDY MASTEN	9/30/2012	ICE BREAKERS
TROUT, GRAY (WEAKFISH)	19 LB. 2 OZ.	WILLIAM E. THOMAS	5/20/1989	DELAWARE BAY
TROUT, SPECKLED	NO CLASSIFICATION			
TUNA, BIGEYE	NO CLASSIFICATION			
TUNA, BLACKFIN	NO CLASSIFICATION			
TUNA, BLUEFIN	873 LBS.	DAN DILLON	2005	ATLANTIC OCEAN
TUNA, FALSE ALBACORE	26 LB. 7 OZ.	MIKE SPAYOD	2022	ATLANTIC OCEAN
TUNA, LONGFIN	80 LBS.	DAVID FRANCELLA	9/15/1987	ATLANTIC OCEAN
TUNA, YELLOWFIN	NO CLASSIFICATION			
WAHOO	106 LBS.	WILL STAHLGREN	9/22/2007	ATLANTIC OCEAN
<u>SHARKS</u>				
BLACK TIP	NO CLASSIFICATION			
BLUE	NO CLASSIFICATION			
HAMMERHEAD, SCALLOPED	NO CLASSIFICATION			
HAMMERHEAD, SMOOTH	NO CLASSIFICATION			
MAKO	975 LBS.	THOMAS BARNES	7/22/2000	POORMAN'S CANYON
THRESHER	NO CLASSIFICATION			
TIGER	NO CLASSIFICATION			

Note: All Atlantic Coast records recognized as of December 22, 2023

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We don't see many weakfish this big anymore! Anthony Pepe caught this 26.75" sea trout at the end of October at the Del-Jersey Reef while fishing for sea bass on the "New Beginnings" with Capt. Richie Krauss. Weighed at Hook'em & Cook'em at the Indian River Inlet.



Mid December saw some mild and calm days. Tyler Clazey and Taylor Bakke found a smooth day to get in on the inshore bluefin tuna bite. They landed this 60" bluefin tuna on a 14K spinning reel with a paddle tail bait just 8 miles off the beach on an 18' center console!



Capt. Chris Mizurak on the headboat "Angler" was still finding a good bite almost through December. This early December trip started with some sloppy weather but by midday there were big flounder, sea bass up to 5 lbs. and some bluefish up to 14 lbs. in the coolers.

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Matthew Kropp of Middle River, MD got into some fat flounder on this early November trip on the charter boat "Fish Bound". He caught these two 27" and 25" flounder while jigging at an ocean structure. The heaviest was 7 lbs.

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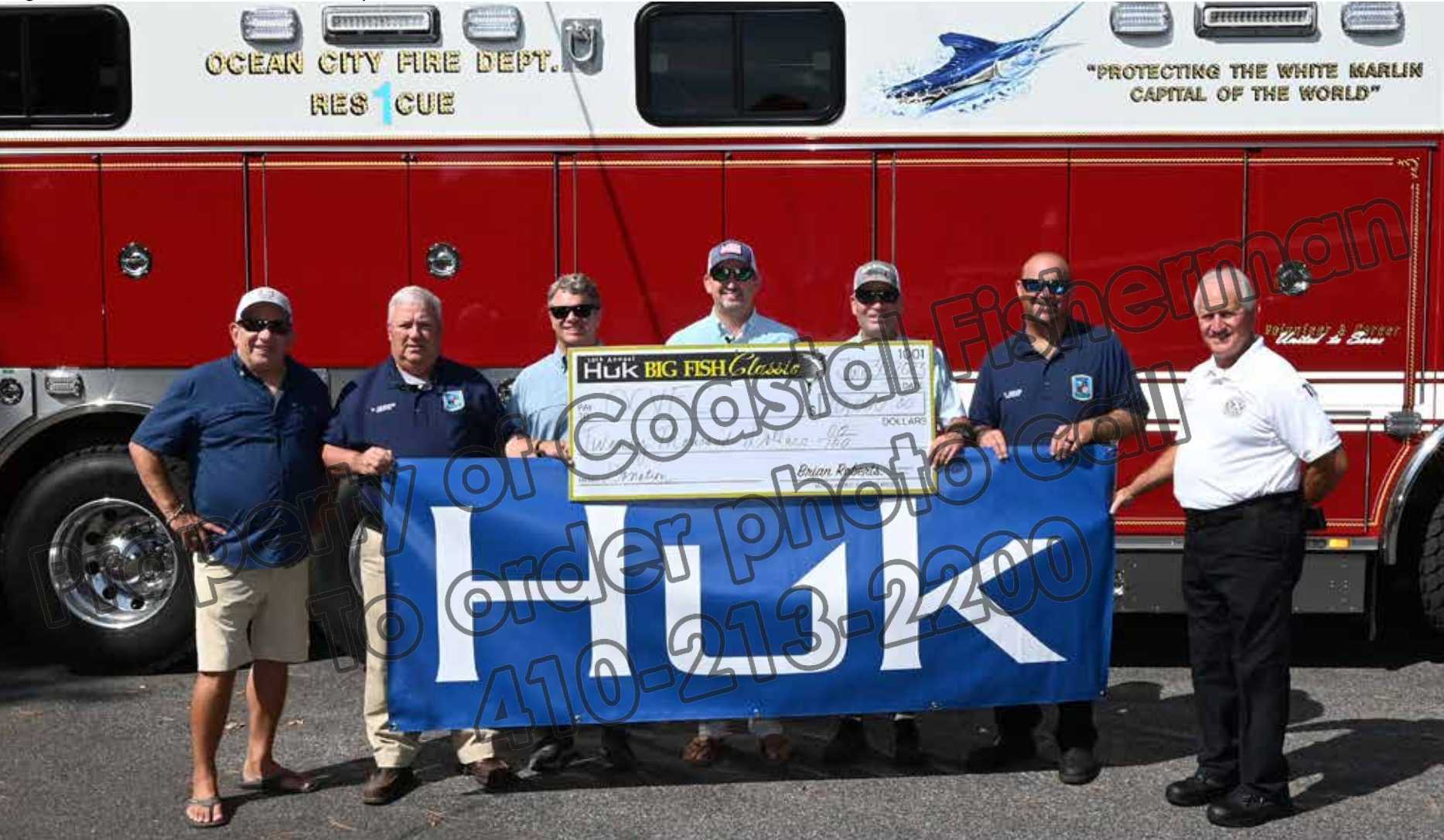
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Atlantic Spadefish	24"	-	-	Wahoo	60"	20 lbs. or 50"	35 lbs.		
Black Drum	48"	50 lbs. or 45"	80 lbs. or 46"	Weakfish	24"	3 lbs. or 20"	30"		
Black Sea Bass	20"	3 lbs. or 17"	5 lbs.	White Marlin*	Any Size	Any Size	Any Size		
Bluefish	34"	12 lbs. or 29"	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"	* Only released fish are eligible in Maryland program					
Speckled Trout	24"	-	5 lbs. or 24"	** DE - Lengths only apply to Live Release					
Striped Bass	40"	44"	44"	*** Use curved-fork-length measurements					
Tautog	24"	7 lbs. or 25"	9 lbs. or 23"						

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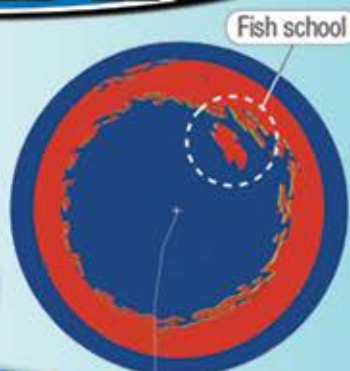
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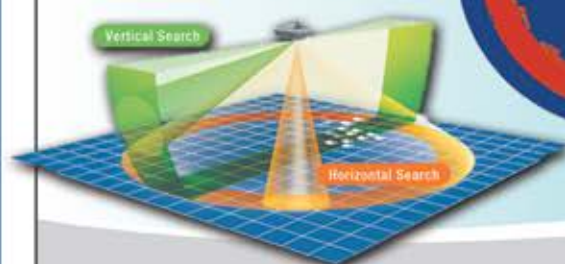
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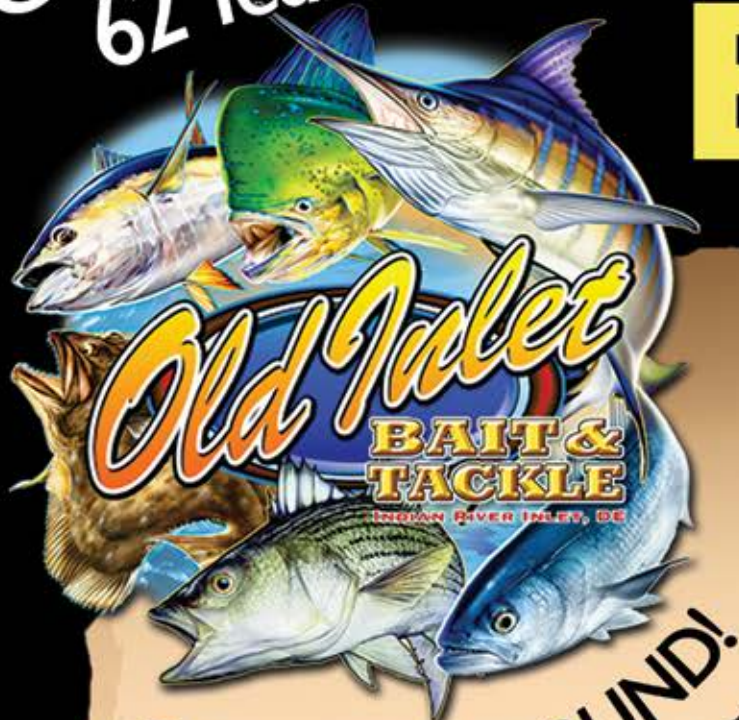
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WHO? WHAT? WHERE?

The FISHING GLOSSARY

As most of our reader know, we use a lot of terminology and some slang to describe equipment, fish, locations, etcetera! We do get questions on these so we thought a Glossary would be interesting. It is not a complete list by any imagination, so if you have a term to add, email it to us at CoastalFisherman@comcast.net

What Did They Mean?

Fattie/Flattie - Usually referring to a flounder or fluke

Bailer Dolphin - This phrase is used to describe a small dolphin, usually in the 2 to 5 pounds range and small enough to lift into the boat by grabbing the leader.

Ballyhoo - The ballyhoo is a baitfish of the halfbeak family and are frequently used as cut bait and for trolling purposes by saltwater sportsmen. Ballyhoo are distributed in tropical-warm temperate latitudes on both sides of the Atlantic in Florida where they inhabit shallow bank areas or grassflats associated with coral reefs.

Calcutta - Fishing tournaments of all kinds create opportunities for anglers to not only participate in these events for a set guaranteed prize money, but to also invest in specific categories based on their interest or ability to invest! These additional categories above and beyond the tournament entrance fees are commonly called Calcuttas. For example you can enter the White Marlin Open for a relatively small entrance fee and then enter the Calcuttas that you want. There are also Small Boat Calcuttas to allow smaller boats to compete against each other. Likewise there are options for heaviest fish by species (Tuna, Marlin, Dolphin, etc), daily catch, most billfish releases and some sizable Winner Take All choices. Most of these are funded by the anglers or bats paying the specific Calcutta fees. These fees can add up if a boat wanted to enter all Calcuttas in a tournament, or go 'across the board' as it is called. The combined totals can exceed \$50,000 for the larger events.

CBBT - Shorthand for the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel.

Chains - Like spreader bars, a Daisey chain is a combination of lures run sequentially in line. Unlike bars, these chains only have a single line or chain.

Chunking - This is a type of fishing whereby baitfish is cut into pieces and tossed over the side to attack fish. There are slight variations by species targeted, but the concept is to create a 'slick' of bait to attract the fish to the boat versus trolling for them. This is a popular method for tuna fishing certain times of the year in the Delmarva area and usually results in enormous amounts of butter fish being put into the Poor Man's Canyon! In this method, pieces of butter fish are put overboard with only 1 have a hook in it. As they sink and the tuna snap up the feast, eventually one hits the piece with a hook. It is very exciting to see tuna swarming behind a boat at anchor in a frenzy and can make for exciting multiple hookups.

Convict - Convict is a nickname for sheepshead given to them due to their notable stripes!

Covered Up - this term refers to when a boat has fish on all the hooks they have in the water.

Cut Bait - While we try to specify what bait is being used, sometimes we are only told 'Cut Bait'. This is simply any fish cut to size to fit the rig or hook. Common types in our area are bunker, mullet or spot.

Deep Dropping - Deep dropping is exactly what it sounds like. Dropping that bait DEEP. Deep dropping can be distinguished from bottom fishing when you are dropping baits deeper than 300 feet. Most anglers who deep drop and have a good depth sounder or good location coordinates so that they can find an abundance of tasty bottom fish. Often used in reference to swordfishing.

Dink 20 or 30 - This refers to smaller reel sizes and bait (typically a naked ballyhoo). Reels ranging from 1000 - 3500 (aka 10 to 35) are typically used to target smaller fish and most often white marlin on our

area. Reels over 4000 or '40' are made for larger fish. So we will remark if a large fish like a tuna is caught on one of these smaller 'Dink' reels as it makes landing the fish much harder.

Doormat - Large flounder are often referred to as 'doormats' due to their size and flat profile. While subjective, we use a 26" minimum for the moniker. Actual doormats that look like flounder are available at many local stores for those so inclined!

ESVA - Acronym for the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Flotsam - This is a term for floating debris on the ocean surface. This can be anything from natural items like weed lines or logs to artificial items like buckets, buoys, coolers, etc. Why they matter is certain fish



like to be under these items for shade or to chase the baitfish. For us most notably that would be mahi.

Gaffer - A 'gaffer' fish is one considered large enough to use a gaff to get it into the boat. It is usually used to differentiate or highlight that the fish caught is larger and is used often when referencing mahi.

Grander - Used in reference to a fish caught that is over a thousand pounds, usually in reference to marlin. For example the 1,135 lb. blue marlin caught by the "Billfisher" during the 30th Annual MidAtlantic was a true 'grander'!

Green Machine - The Green Machine is a classic offshore trolling lure which tempts virtually every pelagic in the ocean and tops the list of big winners. The original Green Machine offered by Sevenstrand consisted of a clear plastic bullet head with green beads inside, followed by a green glitter-flecked skirt. The company changed hands several times and there are a million knock-offs out there today. You'll find versions ranging from 8 to 12 inches, but ask just about any old-timer and he'll

tell you that the original is still the best.

Gulp - We often refer to baits used in shorthand versus the products full names. One of the most popular brands of artificial baits comes from Berkley Fishing. While they offer a



broad range of offerings for many species, their family of Gulp! Soft baits are the go to for many in our area. Flounder fisherman for example love the Gulp Swimming Mulletts and use several colors and sizes to see what is working on any specific day. We try to get details on color and type of Gulp used, but some captains consider that information state secrets!

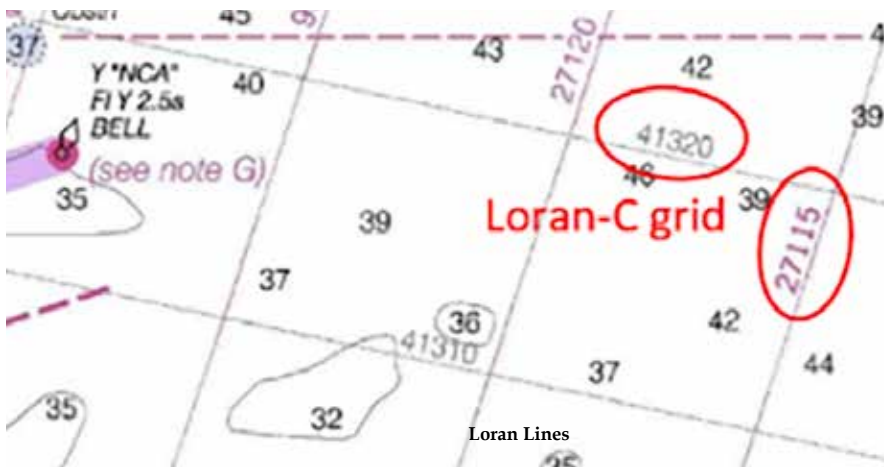
Ilander - Ilander is a brand name for a family of trolling lures made by L & S Tackle with metal heads, artificial eyes and colored skirts. They come in several models, sizes and color variations and while there is a specific model 'The Ilander', any one is commonly referred to an Ilander. This is why we try to specify model or color when possible.

Jigging - The practice of fishing with a jig, a type of weighted fishing lure. A jig consists of a heavy metal (typically lead) sinker with an attached fish hook that is usually obscured inside a soft lure or feather-like decorations. Jigs are intended to create a jerky, vertical "jumping"

Kite Fishing - Offshore kite fishing is a sport fishing technique used to keep live bait on the surface of the water to attract and catch surface feeding predators. It is used in Florida along the Atlantic coast and in the Caribbean for sailfish. It is also used for blackfin and yellowfin tuna, dolphin or mahi-mahi, wahoo, black grouper, and yellowtail snapper. It involves a kite from which a drop line hangs, attached to a lure or bait. The kite is flown over the surface of a body of water, and the bait floats near the waterline until taken by a fish. The kite then drops immediately, signaling to the fisherman that the bait has been taken, and the fish can then be hauled in.

Limit - This expression is used when a private or charter boat catches the allowed amount of fish by the state for federal creel limits. Often used in reference to tuna catches as well as sea bass, but can apply to any species with a creel limit.

Loran Lines and #'s - Fisherman still refer to popular fishing locations using numbers from a legacy navigational system called Loran-C for LOnG RAnge Navigation. During this systems operation run from the



Over - Some regulations, mainly with tuna, allow anglers to catch a certain amount of fish under a certain length and a different number for fish over a number. So for example in 2022, the Federal Size & Creel Limits for bluefin tuna allow for one fish to be kept per vessel that are



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Peanut Mahi - Peanut dolphin are the small, hand sized juveniles.

Pitch Bait - A 'Pitch Bait' is as it sounds, a rod, reel and bait already rigged and ready to pitch in the water when a fish shows up! These can use live or dead baits and are often used when an unexpected fish shows up that won't take a lure already in the water, or pops up around a spreader bar or dredge.

Release - Modern sport fisherman are leaders in the conservation efforts for the species found inshore and offshore with many fishermen fishing for sport and 'releasing' most of what they catch. In our context this phrase mainly refers to marlin caught and released. Most billfish

so for example a schoolie striper would be a small or sublegal fish (currently under 28").

Skirt - A 'Skirt' is typically a lure with a heavy head with colored ribbons or fibers flowing from the head. If held upright the ribbons can look like a skirt. So when we mention for example a 'Skirted' Ballyhoo, that is a ballyhoo that has had some type of lure attached in front of the head to add weight and the skirt covers part of the bait.

The Slot - When a state or federal regulation only allows a fish to be kept if it is between a minimum or maximum size. For example, rockfish in Maryland for 2022 may only be kept if they were 28" or more, but no more than 35". So a phrase like "Gina caught a rockfish at the top of the 'slot'" would mean her fish was toward the 35" maximum.

Squidnation - Squidnation is a company with headquarters in Maryland that makes a variety of lures, artificial baits and equipment. They are often referenced by boats that use their spreader bars or chains or for the use of their artificial baits in the Otter Tails family.

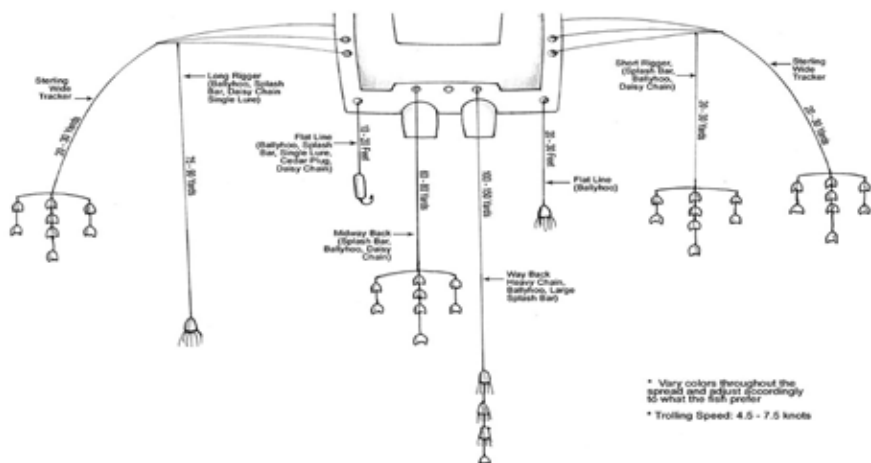
Sterling - Sterling is a manufacturer of spreader bars, dredges, daisy chains and other items like the Joe Shute Lure.

Stretch Lure - There are many companies that make 'stretch' lures with the most notable being Manns Bait Co. Stretch Lures are some of the most effective lipped trolling lures because these lures to get down to where the fish are and are great for a variety of saltwater species from stripers and bluefish to big game fish like tuna and marlin. A model number usually follows the name such as a 'Stretch 20'. As the model number increases, so does the size of the lure and its depth range.

Throwback Ratio - This phrase refers to the ratio of how many fish you need to catch to retain a certain amount of legal size fish. For example for sea bass or flounder we might say the ration was 5:1, or 5 fish caught for every keeper.

Tax Man - a phrase used when a fish is on the hook but a shark takes some or all of the fish before it can be brought to the boat. Usually happens in southern waters/canyons and most notably with tuna.

Top & Bottom Rig - The top and bottom rig is one of the most universal rigs used by Anglers up and down the East Coast and throughout the



tournaments have a release only Calcutta or are release only events, so when we mention a boat or angler had 'x' releases that means they were able to hook a fish and get it to the boat and document that the crew had the fish under control in the water or got the leader to the tip of the rod. Once the specific criteria is met, then the fish is released unharmed.

Roy Rig - The 'Roy Rig' is a lure developed by avid local fisherman Big Bird Cropper. Over his years of fishing he has modified a jig head and shank to maximize impact on flounder, sea trout and bluefish.

Schooler or Schoolie Fish - In general these are smaller fish of a species,

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Chesapeake Bay. It is a simple rig mainly for bottom fishing, but it can yield great results. While they can come in many variations, the basic concept is a rig with a weight to reach the bottom with 2 lines that trail above it with lures or bait. IE a 'top' bait and a 'bottom' bait. This dual system can entice fish on or near the bottom since it offers 2 hooks at different levels.

Trolling Pattern locations - Sometime we mention what line a fish hit on the boats trolling pattern. For example a lot of tuna have hit on a 'widetracker'. Other names include Flat Line, Long Line, Shotgun and Way Back. An example with other names are in the image above.

Under - Some regulations, mainly with tuna, allow anglers to catch a certain amount of fish under a certain length and a different number for fish over a number. So for example in 2022, the Federal Size & Creel Limits for bluefin tuna allow for two fish to be kept per vessel that are 27" to <47" in length. They are referred to as 'unders'.

Canyon Wall - This term is used when captains report fishing on the edges of the canyons, typically described as the west or the one closest to shore or the outer east wall.

Widetracker - This refers to a type of spreader or tracker bar that is designed to move outwards to the port or starboard to get the lures 'wide' in the spread. They can move as far as 30' outwards from a normal spreader bars patterns and put the lures into cleaner water outside of a boat's wake. They have proven very effective for tuna in the last several years.

X for Y on Bites - We often report tuna catches and marlin releases using a phrase like ... "Charter Boat "Boss Hogg" went 4 for 5 on white marlin today". This basically tells us they hooked 5 marlin for the day and got 4 to the boat. The 5th most likely was able to jump off the hook or the tackle failed. For tuna the expression has a slightly different meaning. As tuna travel in schools, it is common for a boat to hook up with multiple tunas at the same time. So for this example a boat could have 5 tuna hooked and boat 3, or they went 3 for 5. Fighting that many tuna at the same time makes it difficult to keep the lines clear and so sometime some break off.

Fishing Locations

800 Square - This popular fishing location is at the intersection of two old Loran C lines, the 41800 & 26800. These old Loran lines are referenced by the last 3 numbers vs the all five, so this area is referred to as the 800x800 or 800 Square. It is located in the Washington Canyon.

2nd Street Bulkhead/Chicago Avenue - A popular spot to get access to the Ocean City East Channel from land is the bulkhead & walkway that parallels the water from 2nd Street north to 4th Street. The road adjacent is Chicago Avenue. There are rocks to deal with, but for the angler that can manage them this can be a productive spot.

Artificial and Natural Reefs - These terms are most often used by party boat captains who prefer not to divulge their fishing spots!

Bass Grounds - Large schools of this game fish will lay claim to this area as the Bass Grounds, which is located about 12 miles due east of Ocean City Inlet. This particular spot has always been popular for anglers seeking sea bass and tautog, both of which congregate within the submerged rubble of an artificial reef.

Bass Pots - pots used to catch sea bass and have buoys to mark them on the surface that fish can congregate under.

East & West Channels in OC - The main East Channel is the deep channel on the east side of the Ocean City bay between the draw of the Route 50 Bridge north to 14th Street. The gray townhouses at 14th Street are part of the Harbor Island Residential Complete.

DA or 'A' Buoy - This marker is about 14 miles slightly south east from the Indian River Inlet and is one of the markers for commercial traffic headed into the Delaware Bay. Just 2 miles north of this marker are a series of lumps that can rise up to a depth of only 8 fathoms surrounded by depths ranging from 10 to 14 fathoms. The area hosts an array of coral reefs and wrecks.

Delaware Light or Lightship - Heading out of the Indian River Inlet on a course of 120 DEGREES for about 20 miles will get you to this former location of an actual Lightship. It is now a large floating platform acting as both a light and transmitter for commercial traffic headed into the Delaware Bay. The floating platform attracts tiny baitfish, small

dolphin, various species of shark and lots of bluefish.

Fathom Lines - We will sometimes mention a Fathom Line in describing a catch location. Nautical charts will show these fathom lines that follow a certain depth. For example the 100 Fathom line or Natural 100 follows the outer edge of between the offshore canyons and outlines the canyons themselves. It is roughly the continental shelf. There are also fathom lines at 10, 20, 30 & 50.

Fenwick Ditch - The Fenwick Ditch connects the northern Assawoman Bay with the Little Assawoman Bay. The northern end is a productive fishing spot.

Hambone - The Hambone is just approximately 30 miles due east of Ocean City Inlet. This lump rises to within 19 fathoms of the ocean's surface with surrounding depths plummeting to 27 fathoms, thus forming an offshore oasis for a multitude of species.

Hot Dog - Among the most popular summer hotspots for a wide range of species is the Hot Dog. This 18-fathom lump is situated approximately 35 miles due east of Ocean City Inlet and is surrounded by depths ranging from 24 to 37 fathoms.

Ice Breaker Pier - This is the northern most breakwater in the DE Bay north of Cape Henlopen and is known for tog and sheepshead.

Jack Spot - The Jack Spot is a vast uprising from the ocean's floor that ascends to within 8 fathoms of the surface. The surrounding depths rapidly fall off to 17 fathoms, thereby the half-mile-long structure is similar to an oasis in the midst of otherwise bleak bottom.

Massey's Ditch - Massey's Ditch is located just northwest of the Indian River Inlet and is at the eastern tip of the Long Neck, DE peninsula. There is a Massey's Landing Public Boat ramp on the ditch.

Ocean City Airport - While many catch reports reference this Municipal Airport that is approximately 5 miles south of the Rt. 50 Bridge as the crow flies, the flounder are actually caught in the Sinepuxent Bay located to the east. From the bay you can see the approach lights and part of the runway.

Ocean City Commercial Harbor - Almost directly west from the Ocean City Inlet is a harbor for several commercial fishing and offshore work. When referred to as a fishing location, in general that means the mouth of the harbor outside of the long pier or at the entrance to Sunset Marina wrapping around north around the Martha's Landing community.

Old Grounds - The Old Grounds is a popular fishing area due to its productivity and relative closeness. It is about 15 east south east of the Indian River Inlet.

Outer and Inner Walls - These are two rock breakwaters outside of the Roosevelt Inlets at Lewes, DE. The Outer Wall is the longest with the ocean on one side and the bay on the other. The Inner Wall is further west and has the bay on both sides. These are noted for tog and sheepshead.

Rt. 50 Bridge - This is probably obvious as is the bridge that connects the Ocean City peninsula with the western side of the Ocean City Bay. The bridge has sidewalks on the both sides that allow anglers to fish the pilings that support the bridge. It is a great location for flounder, bluefish and small rockfish and you can find angler fishing at almost any hour of the day!

Stinky Beach - On the west side of the bay and just south of the Rt. 50 Bridge you will see a sandy beach where vacationers are fishing or just sunbathing. This is Homer Gudelsky Park (Some locals still call it by its old name, Stinky Beach). It's real deep here and there are some holes that go down to 40 feet. There are lots of potential for snags, but some flounder are caught here. Tautog are there too if you use live or frozen sand fleas.

Thorofare - The Thorofare sees a lot of flounder! It is located on the west side of the Ocean City Bay, just offshore of a residential area called Captain's Hill. It's deep next to the houses and just offshore there's a yellow house where locals say they catch a lot of big flounder. Going north, you will see Buoy #6 and from there you can follow the marshes back just offshore of a development called Isle of Wight to Buoy #16. By the time you hit #16 you are almost opposite Ocean Pines and can see the Route 90 Bridge in the distance.

VFW Slough - this is channel located in the southern part of the Indian River Bay and garners its name for being just off shore of the VFW Post 7234 at the northern tip of Cedar Neck Rd. It is known for flounder and for being difficult to navigate due to shallow waters on the approach and shifting sands. §

2023 “BIG MONEY” TOURNAMENT REVIEW



The second and last day of the 3rd Annual Tuna & Tiaras Ladies Tuna Tournament opened with beautiful weather albeit some tough fishing. The “Roncito” changed that when they arrived at the scales at the Ocean City Fishing Center with this 183 lb. bigeye tuna caught by Courtney Grady in the Wilmington Canyon. It took 1st Place beating the next closest by over 100 lbs.



The Ocean City Tuna Tournament is considered a bell weather for the summer tournament season. Participation and payouts are closely watched as harbingers for the upcoming season. It did not fail to produce. Despite very sporty weather during the event big fish made it to the scales. The “Cabana” set a record for catching both the Heaviest Tuna and the Heaviest Stringer for the first time in the event’s history earning a combined payout of \$495,100.

2024

FEDERAL SIZE & CREEL LIMITS

3-200 Miles

BLUE MARLIN
99" Lower Jaw Fork Length
No Retention Limit

WHITE MARLIN
66" Lower Jaw Fork Length
No Retention Limit

DOLPHIN
No minimum Length
Boat Limit 54
Daily 10 per angler

YELLOWFIN TUNA
27" Curved Fork Length
3 per person/day

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

BIGEYE TUNA
27" Curved Fork Length
No Retention Limit

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

SAILFISH
Minimum Length 63" • No Retention Limit

GOLDEN TILEFISH
No minimum • 8 per person/day

BLUELINE TILEFISH
5/1 - 10/31
3 per person (Recreational)
5 per person Uninspected (Charter)
7 per person Inspected (Charter)

WAHOO
No Minimum Length • 2 per person/day

SHARKS
AUTHORIZED SPECIES

No Minimum Fork Length
Atlantic Sharpnose, Bonnethead

54" Minimum Fork Length
Atlantic Blacktip, Bull, Lemon, Nurse, Spinner, Tiger, Blue, Common Thresher, Oceanic Whitetip, 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, Bigeye Thresher, Bignose, Caribbean Reef, Caribbean Sharpnose, Dusky, Galapagos, Longfin Mako, Narrowtooth, Night, Sandbar, Sand Tiger, Sevengill, Shortfin Mako, Silky, Sixgill, Smalltail, Whale, White

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2021 WMO First Place
White Marlin 85.5 lb. \$3.24 Million

2017 OC Tuna Tournament
First Place Total Weight \$200,000

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2023 “BIG MONEY” TOURNAMENT REVIEW



Weather again knocked another summer tournament, the HUK Big Fish Classic, with the directors adding another day to the event. Of the 68 of the 69 boats that chose to fish that extra day, it was the local boat “Port-A-Bella” out of Lewes, DE that ruled the day. They broke from the pack and beat north into the weather to the Baltimore Canyon to get yellowfins, and then to the Wilmington where they found a bigeye. The mix earned the crew a combined payout of over \$220,000.

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The competition for top tuna during the 50th Annual White Marlin Open was competitive with over 9 bigeyes hitting the scales through Day 4 of the event with a 247.5 pounder at the top of the board. Day 5 saw “Reel Tight” shatter that leaderboard with this 265 lb. eyeball from the Washington Canyon. It was not only the Heaviest Bigeye of the season, but also put just over \$1M in the crew’s pockets.

2023 "BIG MONEY" TOURNAMENT REVIEW



The 50th running of the White Marlin Open was full of twists and turns and a big payout! Throughout the week almost 600 marlin were caught, but no qualifying white or blue marlin made it to the scales at Harbor Island through Day 4 of the 5 day event. The "Floor Reel" changed all that when they brought in this 640½ lb. blue that John Ols caught just below the Poor Man's Canyon in 130 fathoms. This single marlin earned the crew an incredible combined prize money payday of just over \$6.2 million dollars. Not only a record for the White Marlin Open, but the largest award for any tournament globally!



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2023 "BIG MONEY" TOURNAMENT REVIEW



The Capt. Steve Harman's Poor Girl's Open is a highlight of the summer tournament season in Ocean City. It was originally created for local waitresses and bartenders to have an affordable and fun competition while raising money for an important cause. It has evolved into a significant event with costume contests, music and raffles. It was the crew of the "Reel Chaos" that took top honors this year, releasing 4 white marlin in a single day and earning over \$100,000 in prize money. Capt. Anthony Matarese made a long run 98 miles northeast to the Spencer Canyon where the lady anglers went 4 for 5 on whites and had a blue marlin on the line for a while before it pulled the hook. The American Cancer Society won too with a contribution of \$155,000 from the tournament and the Harman family.

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2023 "BIG MONEY" TOURNAMENT REVIEW



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The 2023 Tournament season ended with a bang during the 32nd Annual MidAtlantic Tournament. After a summer of challenging billfishing, the MidAtlantic saw lots of qualifying white and blue marlin hit the scales at Cape May and Ocean City.

The local boat "Boss Hogg" (top left) picked one of the fairer weather days to take advantage of the extended range of the tournament. They headed north 105 miles to outside of the Lindenkohl Canyon and landed a 76 lb. white taking 2nd Place for White Marlin Overall. Despite the 2nd Place finish, the crew earned the biggest payout of the tournament by being 'across the board' in all calcuttas earning over \$1.4M.

The 1st Place Blue Marlin also took home big money, almost \$1.2M. The "Pipe Dreamer" (above) from Ocean Port, NJ boated the winning 889 lb. blue from in between the Lindenkohl and Spencer Canyons on Day 3. It was the 3rd largest blue marlin in the tournament's history and a record payout for the category.



A white Hurricane SD 235 speedboat with a black frame and a Yamaha outboard motor is shown from an aerial perspective, moving across the water. Several people are on board, including a man at the helm. The boat has "Hurricane" and "SD 235" written on its side.

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Hurricane

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A Godfrey pontoon boat with a grey and black color scheme is shown from an aerial perspective, moving across the water. Several people are on board, including a man at the helm. The boat has "GODFREY" and "ALBANY" written on its side.

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A big smile from Hillary Graves as she shows off the 56" bluefin tuna caught in early December. She was fishing on the "Bird Dog" with Capt. Chip Graves at the Fenwick Shoals when this one hit on a blue & white Joe Shute from Lewes Harbour Marina.



It was a new personal best for Dennis McDermott with this tog caught on green crab. It was just a little shy of 10 lbs. He caught this one offshore on a piece of man made reef while fishing with Capt. Wayne Anderson on the charter boat "Just a Toy" in mid November.

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The summer season may have cooled, but the action at the Rt. 50 Bridge certainly did not. Jamie Crosby of Berlin, MD snagged this fat 24" red drum off the bridge in mid October using a Lunker City soft bait.

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2024 TOURNAMENTS

**3rd Annual
Blues
for D.U.
JUNE 7-9**

**31st Annual
Capt. Steve Harman's
Poor Girls Open
AUGUST 15-17**

**19TH Annual
Flounder
Pounder
SEPTEMBER 8**



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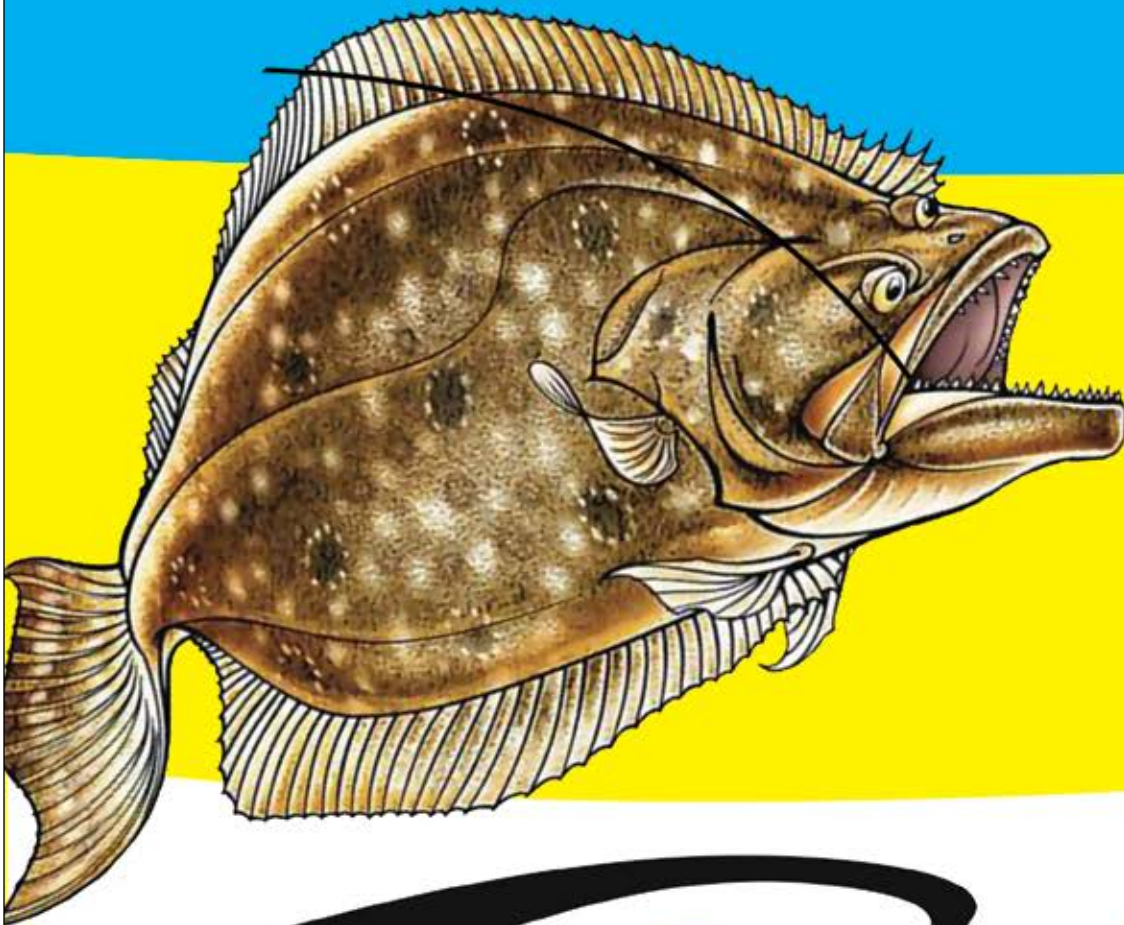


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Charter boat "Green Reaper" owners J.D. and Mary Eddy with their faithful pup Biscuit finished October with a nice catch of 3 keeper flounder and 22 sea bass. Pictured at the Ocean City Fishing Center.



Zach Brunner was up to his usual shenanigans on the this trip with Capt. Josh Lowery on the "Reel Current". Capt. Zach was the mate on this trip to the Washington Canyon in late October where they went 2 for 3 on swordfish.



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Benjy and Betty Bruggess enjoyed some late November sunshine and a solid rockfish bite over the Thanksgiving holiday. Overall they released 10 while fishing with spec rigs and top water lures in the Rehoboth Bay.







Capt. Chris Mizurak on the headboat "Angler" shared they had a strong fall season including this trip to end November. Warmer weather and calm seas greeted anglers as did sea bass, porgies and a single flounder!

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33rd Annual Capt. Zed's Spring Flounder Tournament
April 26 - May 5 • Wachapreague, VA • 757-789-3222

MAY

Old Inlet Annual Spring Surf Fishing Tournament
May 4 • Old Inlet Bait & Tackle • 302-227-7974

Joe Morris Memorial Canal Flounder Tournament
TBD • Lewes Harbour Marina • 302-645-6227

Cast for a Cure Team Surf Fishing Tournament
May 18 • Old Inlet Bait & Tackle • 302-227-7974

JUNE

3rd Annual Blues for D.U.
June 7-9 • Bahia Marina • 410-289-7438

OC Smackdown Tuna Tournament
June 10-11 • Atlantic Tackle • 410-289-7438

3rd Annual Tuna & Tiaras Ladies Tuna Tournament
June 16-17 • 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
June 21-23 • Indian River Marina • 302-227-3071

45th Annual OCMC Small Boat Tournament
June 22-23 • Ocean City Marlin Club • 410-213-1613

**6th Annual Fish N Paddle Saltwater Slam
Kayak Fishing Tournament**
June 24-25 • Ocean City, MD • 410-868-5488

JULY

42nd Annual Canyon Kick Off
July 5,6,7 • Ocean City Marlin Club • 410-213-1613

MidAtlantic Cup
July 4 • Cape May, NJ • 609-884-0177

South Jersey Yacht Sales Offshore Showdown
July 10-13 • Cape May, NJ • 609-884-0177

36th Annual Ocean City Tuna Tournament
July 12-14 • Ocean City Fishing Center • 410-213-1613

Paradise Bay Tournament
July 13-14 • ParadiseGrillDE.com • 410-213-1613

20th Annual Marlin Club Kid's Classic
July 20-21 • Ocean City Marlin Club • 410-213-1613

Cape May Marlin Tournament
July 25-28 • Cape May, NJ • 609-884-0177

11th Annual HUK Big Fish Classic
July 26-28 • Talbot Street Pier • 410-213-0325

AUGUST

Marlins for Mason

August 2-3 • Ocean City Fishing Center • 410-213-1613

16th Annual OCMC Ladies Tournament "Heels & Reels"
August 2-3 • Ocean City Marlin Club • 410-213-1613

17th Annual Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce Flounder Tournament
August 3 • Ocean Pines Yacht Club • 410-641-5306

51st Annual White Marlin Open
August 5-9 • Harbour Island Marina • 410-289-9229

Paradise Grill Flounder Pounder
August 14-18 • Long Neck, DE • www.FlounderPounderOpen.com

31st Annual Capt. Steve Harman Poor Girl's Open
August 15-17 • Bahia Marina • 410-289-7438

The MidAtlantic
August 20-25 • Cape May, NJ & Ocean City, MD

SEPTEMBER

66th Annual OCMC Labor Day Tournament
TBD • OC Marlin Club • 410-213-1613

23rd Annual Ocean City Fishing Center Spot Tournament
September 14 • OC Fishing Center • 410-213-1121

19th Annual Bahia Marina Flounder Pounder
September 8 • Bahia Marina • 410-289-7438

Delaware Seashore Fall Surf Fishing Classic
September 28-29 • Old Inlet Bait & Tackle • 302-227-7974

OCTOBER

41st Annual Mid-Atlantic Surf Fishing Tournament
Oct 5-7 • Ocean City, MD • 410-251-2203

8th Annual Ocean City Inshore Classic
Oct 5-6 • Atlantic Tackle • 410-430-1016

4th Annual Bishop Broadbill Bash
TBD • Sunset Marina • 410-213-9600

DMS Invitational Surf Fishing Tournament
Oct 11-13 • Old Inlet Bait & Tackle • 302-227-7974

Lewes Harbour Marina Tautog Tournament
Late October - Late November • Lewes, DE • 302-645-6227

For complete tournament
coverage results, pick up the
Coastal Fisherman every week
from May through September or
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www.coastalfisherman.net



It was a great way to end the season for the crew of the “Chain Reaction” in mid October. Capt. Brad Clubb with mates Ross & Grant Clubb had anglers Roxanne Clubb, Chase Clubb, Bobby McNamee, Loren Manzioni and Megan Bisasky in the Wilmington Canyon. They set to chunking and landed 10 yellowfins up to 67 lbs. including Chase’s first tuna. To top it off they snagged a 31 lb. speedster trolling home in 30 fathoms.



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