

Fishing & Hunting Journal TM



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Tournament Winner
In Amatuer Division
Tom Disney
43.1 pound rockfish*



*1st. Place MSSA
Tournament Winner
In Pro Division
Captain Ed O'Brien
43.6 pound rockfish*

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THIS ISSUE COMPLIMENTS OF

IN THIS ISSUE...

- SUMMER STRIPERS
- LURES FROM YESTERDAY
- THE BUCK STOPS HERE
- MSSA RESULTS
- LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
- MARSH CREEK SURPRISE

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17. Headaches
18. Neck creaks/cracks/stiffness
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21. Burning/stabbing sensation
22. Bell's palsy
23. Double or blurry vision/floaters
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25. Ringing/buzzing in ears, sound sensitivity
26. Dizziness, poor balance, motion sickness
27. Light headedness
28. Confusion, difficulty thinking
29. Difficulty with concentration
30. Short term memory loss
31. Disorientation, getting lost
32. Speech—think one thing, another word comes out
33. Mood swings, irritability, depression, crying for no reason
34. Nightmares, night sweats
35. Do you feel like dying?
36. Have you seen multiple doctors without success?
37. Do people say you are a hypochondriac/ do they say it's all in your head?

Summer Stripers



“HOOKED ON FISHING”

By Lenny Rudow

Historically, summer fishing for stripers on the Chesapeake is relatively slow; spring and fall have always been the really hot times to fish. But this has changed through the years. Blame climate change, water quality, bait stocks, or whatever the heck you'd like—even the politicians. The bottom line is that early summer fishing in the bay is now usually red-hot. Here are three particularly sweet mid-bay summer bites you'll want to get in on.

1. THE BAY BRIDGES – Years ago eeling at the Bay Bridge pilings during the fall months was the ticket to success. Today, summers spent around those pilings can be amazingly productive. But the favored bait nowadays is live spot. Start your day by dragging bot-

tom rigs with tiny (number 6 or 8) hooks, baited with bloodworm or Fishbites bits, across the shell bottom at Hackett's Bar or just inside of the Sewer Pipe. Get at least a half-dozen spot per angler, and then head for the bridge.

Boat positioning is the key feature to live-lining at the pilings; the captain should plan on staying at the wheel, kicking the boat in and out of gear up-current of the structure as the anglers drift their livies back to the piles. You can also try pulling alongside them so your anglers can toss their baits into the pocket of calm water, but when the current is roaring (and it often is, at the bridge), this can be tough.

Send back the spot on both weighted and un-weighted rigs, until you determine the depth range the fish are holding at. In this situation, using rubber-core sinkers is a good idea so you can quickly add or remove weight from your line, as necessary.

I'd love to state specific piling numbers and say outright which ones are hot and which are not. But if I did so, I'd be doing a serious disservice to some of the old-timers who've given me tips through the years. So sorry, folks, you'll have to find 'em yourself. Don't spend too much time at any one piling if you're not getting bites, and simply hop from one to the next until you locate one that's holding some fish.

2. EASTERN BAY – Remember when The Hill was loaded with boats from September through

October? Back in the 90's, this was a regular event. But the past few years the fall bite here has been pretty lethargic. Surprise: there have been plenty of stripers cruising around The Hill, but they've come earlier and departed earlier, in years of late. Mid-June saw a nice run of 16" to 26" fish last season, mostly in 32' to 34' depths on the northern edge of the drop-off. Chumming with bunker, baits set on bottom and mid-depth, was usually the most effective method. By late July, poof! They were gone.

Take advantage of this action by anchoring up, hanging a chum bucket over the side, and cutting a healthy supply of domino-sized bunker baits. String 'em on a 6/0 Gamakatsu Octopus or Octopus Circle hook, tied off to a three to four foot leader of 30-pound fluorocarbon. End your leader by tying in a loop with a Spider Hitch, and clip it to the ball-bearing swivel on the end of your main line. Above the swivel, rig a one to three ounce egg sinker. For your mid-depth rigs, use half- to quarter-ounce eggs. Set the reels in freespool, clicker on, and wait for the bites.

Another good Eastern Bay hotspot that's been active during the summer months is the 20-something flats on the north side of Poplar's



This warm-weather striper was chummed up at The Hill.

See Rudow Page 5

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Jenn Donisi and Carlos with one of four Pacific Sailfish she released on a recent trip to Costa Rico..



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- Enactment of the Maryland *Hunting Heritage Protection Act*
- Sunday Hunting of Deer Authorized for the First Time Since 1723
- Defeated Efforts to Impose a Black Bear Hunting Moratorium
- Fishing Opportunities on the Chesapeake Bay Protected by the *Freedom to Fish Act*
- "First" State to Earmark Hunting License Fees for the *Farmers & Hunters Feeding the Hungry Program*
- Defeated Efforts to Prohibit the Use of Leghold Traps
- Opened up 50,000 Acres of Chesapeake Lands for Public/Private Hunting
- Prohibited Offshore Mooring of Boats by Duck Blinds during Waterfowl Hunting Season

To learn more about the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Foundation and how you can help protect the interests of Maryland sportsmen: (1) visit our website—www.mdsportsmen.com; (2) contact the Foundation's Vice Chairman (Bill Miles) billmiles@chesapeake.net; or (3) write to us at:

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OUR HERITAGE AS CONSERVATION-MINDED SPORTSMEN MUST NEVER BE COMPROMISED

Rudow ...

Continued from Page 3

Island. Added bonus: this bite often does continue well into the fall months. But chumming isn't the best bet here; instead, you'll have to spend some time loading up on those little spot, because live-lining is the name of the game in this location. Be sure to set some baits at differing depths, and always keep one live out there with no weight at all.

3. CHESAPEAKE BEACH/ THE CHOPTANK – Two topwater bites that have been starting surprisingly early in the season have taken place during the past few years, ranging from Chesapeake Beach across the bay to the mouth of the Choptank and little Choptank Rivers. This is run-and-gun fishing, with schools that are commonly fast-moving and quick to disappear. The best way to find them is with binoculars, especially high-powered gyro-binocs that offer 12x or 14x magnification.

But as you scan the horizon

looking for birds, also pay attention to the water's surface—for some reason, last year there seemed to be fewer gulls hovering and diving on these schools of fish during the summer months.

When you locate the fish approach gingerly, coming off of plane 100 yards away and putting close at idle speeds. Approach from the up-wind side of the school, so you can shift into neutral and drift closer to the fish instead of drifting farther away. Cast topwater plugs and jigs, but if you encounter lots of throw-backs, switch over to heavy jigging spoons and try vertical jigging underneath the main school of fish—often, this is where the big boys are hanging out.

Sure, it's hot during the summer months. Yes, the bay will be crowded on weekends. And of course, you will be tortured by marauding bluefish at this time of the year. But take full advantage of summer striper fishing, and you'll discover that what used to be a slow period on the bay is now an excellent time to fill the cooler. Just don't give any credit to the politicians.



Josh Lowrey found out the fish in Eastern Bay were more than willing to cooperate last summer.



The average summer striper isn't huge, but it makes for good fun - and good eating.

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The Old Stuff

"TACKLE BOX TIM"

By *Tim Sherman*



The fishing tackle industry is always introducing new gear that we must have. They honestly know how to keep the interest going throughout the sport. Innovative companies like Sebile, Lucky Craft, Ima, and Jackall have appealed to many fishermen, even though the price of their lures asks for us to pay top dollar. I try a variety of new tackle each year. I find some things that make it into my tackle rotation, and other things become flea market fodder. Though the appeal of new tackle is intriguing, what makes it any better than what we are already casting.

Well, here's to the old stuff. Look at the deck of most bass fishermen. Rods will be laid out with a variety of lures tied on. One could see that, if six rods are on the deck, four of them will have "old reliables" tied

on. The other two rods will have current or new baits tied on in the hope that they, too, will become trusty in time.

I found an old favorite lure of my brother Gil's while running the flea market circuit this winter. I bought an Excalibur Super Spot in the bleeding shad color and delivered it on our visit this past April. It was like giving him a five-pound gold nugget. He used one of his own to catch several bass when we fished together. (Note: Who would have thought that the Excalibur name would be thought of as old? Its origins go back to the mid-1990s when PRADCO created the brand to tweak lures from their other brands, Cotton Cordell, Bomber, Heddon, etc., while introducing a few new baits. Now the logo is XCalibur and all of the lures are exclusive to the brand). As when brands are discontinued, the only ways to acquire the old lures

is find them at flea markets like I did or through good old fashion horse trading.

Another lipless crankbait that's been off the market for years is the Mann's Pogo shad. One of the biggest advocates for the lure is Captain Jerry Sersen. I got a mild tongue lashing back in February when I found one on a flea market table before he did. Jerry has caught fish from perch to bass to stripers on the odd shaped rattler. Its paddle shaped tail makes the lure fall slower through the water column than other lures in its class. Sersen feels that this action has accounted for numerous fish over the years that he might have missed if he had been using a stereotypical rattle trap.

A lure that I consider old school is the Rapala Shallow Shad Rap. It has a unique L-shaped diving lip that allows it to dive down to about three feet. I initially discounted the lure as it did not yield many bites. While in a rental boat out of Dundee Creek one day, I noticed a fisherman in a bass boat landing

numerous bass. He told me he was using the shallow diving crankbait and that the best way to get bites with it is to use it as a jerkbait. Crank it a few turns, twitch it, and pause it. Since that day of enlightenment, I've caught my fair share of bass by twitching the Shallow Shad Rap along the edges of weed beds. The only drawback to the lure is that it is light weight. It is best used with spinning tackle. Admittedly, I've not cast the lure in the last few years. Now it's time to put the lure back into the rotation.

One lure that is not spoken about much anymore is the Mann's 1-Minus. For years, this wide wobbling, shallow diver has been drawing strike at or just below the surface. I know several tournament anglers who can attribute cashing checks to the lure. Over the last few years, several other manufacturers have come out with surface bulging baits that have seemed to supplant the 1-Minus.

See Sherman Page 7



My Brother Gil with a nice Largemouth Bass and his favorite lures seem to be working. Tim Sherman Photo

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Sherman ...

Continued from Page 6

Crankbaits aren't the only category of lure from back in the day. We can also reach back for old style soft plastics. Last year I finally got the feel for fishing a shaky head worm. For those unfamiliar with the technique, it's the equivalent of rigging a worm weedless on a jig head. Most anglers fish the shaky

head with modern worms that are scent impregnated and/or laden with salt. I've found that one of the best worms for shaky head fishing is the Creme Scoundrel. You can't get much older than this worm. It's the original soft plastic worm that dates back more than 60 years. The worm is still as effective as ever when you need the subtle presentation of a straight tail worm, yet being able to adapt it to a new presentation like the shaky head is always a bonus.

The list of lures from yester-

year that we've moved to the back of our tackle box could stretch for many more paragraphs. Some folks might be reluctant to cast some of the old favorites because of their availability is very limited. Yet, fortunately, some of the old stuff is still available. The Scoundrel worm, the 1-Minus, and the Shad Raps are in stock at most tackle retailers. There was a time when what we consider old lures were new. It's a common

theory that bass become accustomed to popular lures. If we break out the old stuff while throngs of anglers are casting the latest and greatest technology lures, we might get more bites than they do.

There's nothing wrong with keeping up with the times when it comes to the lures we select, but let's not forget what got us started. Make sure we cast the trusty old lures along with the new ones.



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The Stay at Home Buck



"HUNTING PASSION"

By Mike Monteleone

They're called phantoms and ghosts. They live in places with names like the "Dark Swamp" and "Foggy Ditch". They possess a lifestyle that defies our abilities to decode. In short, they are living legends of the timber. We've come to look upon the wariness of mature whitetail bucks as if it were something mystical and mythological. Their lives definitely are fascinating, yet these deer can be had – some of them but not all for sure. Every year lucky bowhunters across the country prove that even the smartest bucks sometimes make mistakes. The trick, of course, is being within 20 yards when it happens. No small task.

One aspect of mature buck behavior that makes these animals so intriguing, and yet so challenging at the same time, is their propensity to disappear for weeks, months and even years before reappearing again. This situation brings to bear an uncomfortable matter of statistic logistics: how am I going to get a crack at this deer if he isn't even here? You can spend the entire season hunting a dream – a solid legendary ghost of a deer you saw one day and now is gone with the fading light. Only, at the time, you didn't know it was a legendary ghost. That's the fascination and the frustration of hunting these majestic animals.

Two seasons ago I spent 14 days hunting a buck in Illinois. Seven consecutive days, two different weeks. He was a buck that reportedly was a 5 x 5 that would rival any buck ever taken in that area much less the majority of the country. He was scored on the hoof by a friend of mine at over 200 inches. A solid number knowing the caliber of Jason's live scoring and history with giant whitetails. I'd never even seen the deer myself, but I still spent the entire time waiting for him to reappear. I sat day after day on good stands on the same farm where he was seen five times the year before during the same phase of the rut. He may have been seen about a mile away while I was there, but you know how those stories go. It could have been any "big" deer.

I was hunting an idea, but not really a deer. You're only hunting the deer when you know he's around. During those 14 total days I never once saw any sign of the deer my friend described. My best guess is

that the deer and I were never in the same proximity. We probably weren't within a mile of one another.

The whole experience was not unique. I'd hunted similar bucks before with similar outcome. Sure, there have also been a few bucks that I've hunted successfully after seeing them earlier in the season, but they are definitely in the minority. It got me to thinking. Why is it that some bucks are seen repeatedly in and around the same area – sometimes for years – while others are only seen once or twice and then never again? More importantly, how can you tell which deer you're hunting without investing a whole season to find out?

They Do Exist

From my own experience and those of my regular hunting buddies, the existence of bucks that live out their entire lives in one small area is indisputable. We've shot a few of them to prove it. I can even offer two examples that should provide encouragement for frustrated buck hunters.

Phil Dunst shot a 179+ inch non-typical near the end of October. The story actually started in 2009 when Phil and I both saw the buck several times all within an area of a few hundred yards. Believe it or not, I actually passed the buck as a three and one-half year old, three times from one stand. He was a lot smaller-obviously still young-so instead of shooting him I elected to let him go and hope to some day see him as a real giant. I literally had to put my hands in my pockets every time I saw him so I wouldn't be tempted to shoot him.

We got lucky and no one killed him during the gun season later in the year. The buck did his part by growing what was probably 35-freak-crazy inches of additional antler in one year! Phil videotaped the buck repeatedly during the summer of 2010 on a bean field near a deep wooded ditch where we'd been seeing him. Phil tried to hunt him from ground blinds and stands located on and around the bean field during late September and early October but to no avail.

By late October Phil decided to shift his efforts deeper into the timber, and shot the buck on his first morning after changing strategies. As it turns out, the stand where the buck was taken was only 100 yards from where we had seen him so many times in 2009. Now that's a stay at home buck!

My friend, Bradd Atkinson, took another good buck. Bradd saw him in the late summer months as well. This one was also showing up on a bean field. The buck was seen once

in mid-October and a few times in early November frequenting the same field. Despite the sightings, Bradd wasn't able to close the gap until the middle of November. Bradd had the buck walk directly underneath him while hanging a stand on a Sunday. After watching him for a few minutes it was obvious that he had pinpointed his whereabouts and probably his core area. Bradd felt that he would likely stay in that area for the day and he would sneak in the next day and hunt the entire day if needed.

The next morning as Bradd got closer to his twenty-foot hideout he noticed the overwhelming smell of estrous. As daylight approached he watched a smaller buck approaching a small patch of green-briar located 10 yards behind his perch. As the buck got closer to investigate the heady smell of natural doe-in-heat

the big buck Bradd was after suddenly appeared from the thick cover – away from a pinned doe – within bow range. At twenty-nine yards Bradd's shot brought the 155-inch basic 8-pointer down within 10 yards. Again, the key to Bradd's success was the nature of the buck he was hunting. He was somewhat visible, but more importantly he was a homebody.

It's good to know that at least a few the bucks we see during the course of our lives aren't pure myth, but it sure would be nice to know which ones stay at home and which ones live the life of a gypsy before investing a hunting season. Questioning my own judgment and experience on this matter, I have spoken to a few of the country's preeminent professional hunters – outfitters and guides – over the years.

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to hunt with Larry Larson, owner and operator of High Mountain whitetails of Kansas. We hunted for turkeys in Kansas – well, we goofed-off and fun-hunted to test out a few turkey techniques. But, just over a few days of hunting-talk I learned more about mature whitetails just by listening to Larry's stories. One story in particular was about a deer his clients had hunted for nine years. It was a nine-pointer if I recall correctly. The antler size of the deer is not important in this case, it is the age of the deer. Larry knew where the deer was sleeping but there was no way to get his clients into his bedroom without being detected so his plan of attack was always to setup outside to wait for the deer to return or leave his bedroom. Many of his bowhunters had tried tirelessly to kill the deer but to no avail.

One of the reasons I look past antler score and focus on age is because score is not a true measurement of the challenge of the hunt. For example, a 4-year old buck may score 130 P&Y inches in Maryland and it may score 160 P&Y inches in the Midwest. The 160 inch buck is no more seasoned or savvy than the 130 inch buck of the same age. Matching wits with either deer and coming out on top is a tremendous accomplishment – one that should be measured solely by the buck's maturity not his antler score.

After talking with Larry and seeing the giant mounts on his wall – all killed from the ground with a bow – I have no doubt that Larry could have killed the deer if he wanted to (Larry thinks otherwise) but he chose to reserve the deer for that special client. As today the deer has not been killed by a hunter!

Despite a lack of hard scientific evidence, Larry's homebody theories on mature buck movement are valuable. They are a result of many years of intensive hunting-study of whitetails and should not be discounted. Larson acknowledged the fact that some bucks seem to stay at home while others seem to travel more. He has seen bucks in free-ranging conditions that lived out their lives within areas of less than 150 acres. (That's about the size of the average farm in many parts of the country!) On the other hand, some bucks have much larger home ranges, more easily measured in miles than in acres.

There's more to consider when deciding whether or not to hunt a specific buck than simply the size of his home range. There is also the question of visibility. A certain percentage of the bucks that seem to disappear are still around, they simply have adopted behavioral patterns that keep them out of sight. In other words, you don't see them because they move very little and then only when absolutely

required. Essentially, these bucks have become unkillable by legal methods. This transition usually starts to accelerate when the buck reaches four years of age.

My buddy Richard McIntyre and Larry Larson feel that bucks jump a huge behavioral gap from 3 years of age to 4 years of age. They become a different animal. Their systems gear down and their movements become much more studied and efficient. Everything they do has a purpose and they take almost no chances. While a 3-year old buck may resemble a 25 year-old man in some ways – still full of vigor, but wiser than he was a teenager – 4 year old bucks act more like 45 year old men. They aren't nearly as aggressive and have an increasing desire to simply be left alone. This I know from personal experience.

So, even in places that have a reasonable number of older bucks, they are not seen very often. It is rare indeed to find one that is both visible and a homebody.

There is no easy way to determine if the buck you've been watching during the summer will still be there in the fall. Bucks will tolerate each other in August. In fact, they even look for each other's company. However, when velvet sheds and the testosterone levels begin to rise they become rivals. This causes dispersal of the bachelor groups and some of the buck will begin to setup their own

core areas miles away. For this reason, it does little good to base your theory that a certain buck lives in a certain area simply on the fact that he was seen there in August.

For example, for the past three years I have captured two mature bucks on trail cameras in the months of July and August but have yet to actually see either two deer through the season. They simply disappear after they shed their velvet. If they were not killed on neighboring properties I will almost guarantee they will appear on camera this August for their yearly travel cycle.

On the other hand, if a buck is seen in a certain area during the fall – especially if he is seen more than once – you have a much better candidate to stake your season upon. Sometimes you will have enough history with a buck to know that your hunting area is the normal fall core area, but other times you will be only hoping. If that's the case, it pays to have a backup plan.

Hunt the chosen deer for a reasonable amount of time, but don't get so hung up on him that you aren't able to pull out and hunt other deer in other areas. Generally it make sense to a lot half of your season to a giant and if you haven't seen him during that time to start considering other options. If you stick with him beyond that point he'd better be worth it because you are likely to go the entire season without drawing your bow.



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Floating the river Part I

by Andy Aughenbaugh



The plan was simple: Float down the river, fish, camp and take it easy, until arriving at the parked Jeep down river four days later. What happened was anything but simple.

My two young daughters and overwhelmed wife looked on. I piloted the gear laden canoe around the first bend of the river and slowly out of sight. I turned one last time and waved the "I'll be fine and thanks for the get-a-way" wave with the canoe paddle and smile. I was now on my own time and schedule for the next four days.

Sales at the office had not been forth coming. The more time I spend persuading known customers along with chasing new leads was not proving beneficial. The commission checks were small, just enough to keep the bills up to date. This float trip had been the wife's idea. She watched as I floundered around, looking for that big sale. She kept the house running while

I searched for commission checks. She saw the fatigue following one particular late night and suggested I take a few days away from the race and pressure. The boss also agreed that maybe I could use a few days to refocus.

Monday morning I rearranged my schedule and by Tuesday afternoon, I was floating down the river with only me and forty miles of river ahead.

The river slowly pushed me down stream. Like it does with most floating objects, the river takes control and takes you on its' path. Sure on can fight the current, and even make some cross current or even some up river progress, but the current is always there pushing you to join in and travel to its' destination. I stopped fighting and let the larger power control my destination. I tossed my plastic imitation minnow in my attempt to gain control over a swimming creature.

It was the month of the Small-

mouth. Late summer is the time for large numbers of small fish. When I was a kid, my father would take me and my older brother smallmouth fishing late in the summer. During my high school years the last day of summer was spent on this very river, casting minnow jerk baits and white deer hair jigs in the last light of the day. Those 100 plus fish days marked the end of my summer and the coming of the fall.

My time on the river over the

der about my latest chase. I may have been away from the river for too long, but the fish hadn't, and in a short time, I was back to my old tricks catching the jumping, current running smallies I had know in my youth. A certain amount of relief came from the realization that some things do stay the same, even if the current of time and age continue to pull on my days.

"Hey! Over here!" Broke the music of the running water softly



last fifteen years has been little. There is always one more sales commission to chase. Casting my bait out to the fish made me won-

tapping the canoe. My personal Zen time was interrupted. I looked over

See Aughenbaugh Page 11

DO FISH SLEEP?

It all depends on what you mean by sleep. My dictionary says that sleep is a period of rest in which the eyes are closed and there is little or no thought or movement. That is, sleeping means closing your eyes and resting. The first thing we notice is that most fish don't have eyelids (except for sharks). Also, while some deep ocean fish never stop moving a great many fishes live nearly motionless lives and many do so on a regular diurnal/nocturnal cycle, some active by day others by night.. So we can't generalize and say that all fish sleep like we do. But most fish do rest. Usually they just blank their minds and do what we might call daydreaming. Some float in place, some wedge themselves into a spot in the mud or the coral, some even build themselves a nest. They will still be alert for danger, but they will also be "sleeping."



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Aughenbaugh ...

Continued from Page 10

to the bank where the shout had originated. An older grey haired man in dirty clothes yelled again, begging for my attention. It was one of those moments - like when you are walking down the street and a homeless person asks for some change. You divert your eyes so you can say something like "sorry, I don't have anything." The guilt is there but not enough to do anything. Well that is what I wanted to do, and made another cast in attempt to ignore the filthy old man. The river's current swept around avoiding several large rocks protruding out of the water. The natural path of the river ran me and my canoe dangerously close to the bank and the beggar.

"Hey, can you help me? Too late, we had made eye contact, I had to respond. "What's up? What do you need?"

"I'm in a big jam." And with those words he reached out and grabbed the bow of my canoe.

Behind him I saw his camp. By the disarray of things, it appeared he had been there for at least a few days, if not longer. Clothes hang on branches drying. Smoke

rolled from a large pile of ashes surrounded in a feeble attempt to pile rocks in a ring. His tent sagged lose on poles and ropes.

"I'm so glad you came by, no one else has been down the river in two days. I started out on Friday for an overnight float trip but when I awoke on Saturday my canoe was gone. I guess the rope broke or came untied or something. I don't know what happened but it was gone.

This damn river took it. I hate this river. I hate camping. This stupid trip was my wife's idea. She thought it would do me some good to spend some time out-of-doors. I'm no mountain man. Get me out of here! Please!"

He held the canoe tight. He was not going to let go. I could see the fright in his eyes. I stepped out of the canoe onto the gravel river bed. The water touched between my ankles and knees. Looking over the situation and the camp more intently, I noticed his gear appeared new. In disarray yes, but good quality stuff from one of those high end adventure sports shops.

"Hi, my name is Jim. It is getting late and I was going to stop soon and set camp for the night. How about I stay here for the night

and tomorrow I'll take you down river with me. Where is your car parked?"

"Thanks, Jim. I'm John. The wife left the car at the battlefield park. I think it is just a few more miles downriver. After she dropped me off, she and her girlfriend went to the beach for the week and will not be home until Friday."

I knew where he was talking about and did not have the heart to tell him it was another two days of travel to the battlefield park. I just told him I knew where he was talking about and said I would take him there tomorrow.

"Before I set up my tent, let's get you squared away. I walked over to his tent and pulled the ropes tight.

"So that's how you do that?" he responded. "Thanks."

Next I went over and tended to the fire. He had collected a ton of fire wood, but apparently had been having a problem keeping it going. With a few proper adjustments, the flame burned brightly. The sun dropped behind the western mountain. I dug out my tent from the canoe and pitched it next to his.

With my fresh food supply I cooked a dinner for kings. Sweet potatoes wrapped in foil cooked on

the hot rocks. I placed my folding fire grate over the hot coals and soon our two steaks began to sizzle. He buttered several slices of bread while the steaks cooked and I opened can peaches.

"Man, I have not eaten since yesterday. I'm so thankful you floated by today and that you stopped. I was beginning to worry if anyone would ever come by." John said with the fire glowing off his face.

"Well things seem to have a way of working out, don't they?" I answered, while thinking, "Not always as we think they should, but in one way or another, the current of life continues - pulling us along for the ride."

We sat together eating our dinner fireside. John asked a lot of questions about the river, fishing and camping. I fell into story telling mode and told countless stories of the times my father, brother and I spent on this river. Late under the star filled sky, we turned in. The last thing John said before closing his tent was "thanks for stopping."

I pulled the zipped tight on my sleeping bag, and with a slight smile I also felt glad to have stopped here for the night.

Next month the float out.



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Colton Stevens (below) caught a bluegill and Mike Stevens (left) huge bass chased the bluegill for like five minutes while it was hooked on Colton's line. The bass ended up catching the hooked bluegill and they could not fight it on the rod they were using. They lost it. They came back with a plastic salamander and a serious rod and ended up catching it again on that. The fish was released back into the pond.



Colton Stevens with a little smaller Largemouth Bass caught on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

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Summer flounder regulations finalized in Delaware

DOVER - The 2011 Summer flounder regulations have been finalized. The new regulations became effective May 11, 2011. The minimum size will be 18 inches, with a creel limit of four fish, and the season will be closed from October 24 - December 31. All 2010 regulations for summer flounder

will remain in effect until Wednesday May 11, at which time the 2011 regulations will be enforced.



Summer flounder regulations finalized in Maryland

The 2011 recreational summer flounder regulations will include a three-fish creel limit statewide, an 18-inch minimum size limit and a season from April 16 through November 30.

Tom O'Brien with this impressive spring gobbler taken in Kent County, Maryland - Weight 22.4 lbs. - 11" Beard - 1 1/4" spurs.



Nathan Godwin with a 42" rock caught near buoy 72 aboard the "Kingfish II", out of Wenona.



John Hood with his 48 inch 40 pound striper caught this spring season. Photo Courtesy of Warren's Bait Box



This is the first fish of the season for Hunter Mast at 34 inches. Photo Courtesy of Trophy Bait & Tackle



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Tom Speakman hooked this 47 inch - 38 lb. - Striper off Kent Island with Councill Charters.

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2011 LEGISLATIVE ROUND UP

By **Steven Huettner**



The 2011 session was one that was dominated by one issue, money, or therefore lack of money. Just about any bill that had any fiscal note attached to it was just about dead

on arrival. The 2011 session as far as sportsmen go could best be defined as the one that got away.

After years of countless letters, testimony, and pleas from the sporting community to do something about rampant poaching and outright theft of our natural resources, the Maryland General Assembly dipped their little toe into the pool. Perhaps it was the images on the news of tons of rockfish (Maryland's State Fish) lying dead in illegal anchored gill nets that finally got the attention of lawmakers in the land of pleasant living. Alas, they failed to reach the brass ring in front of them in regards to adding bark and bite to natural resources scofflaws.

On the fisheries front, there were a

myriad of bills introduced in response to chronic repeat offenders poaching the remnants of Maryland's oysters (many on revoked or suspended licenses). More often than not individuals were caught at night, inside oyster sanctuaries, using power dredges and keeping undersized oysters. In response House Bill (HB) 273 was passed and signed into law. In essence it says if you are cited for unlawfully catching oysters you may have your license suspended, establishing grounds for the revocation, and setting up the parameters for such a hearing.

After the illegally caught rockfish images, the legislature passed HB 1154 which deals with person who commit specified offense related to unlawfully taking striped bass or crabs, authorizing revocation, and setting up regulations for revocation with the Tidal Fish and Sport Fisheries Commissions.

If you use illegal gear, harvest out of season or from a closed area, violate catch and size limits, or falsify your catch you can lose your license. Along the same breath, HB 1225 and HB 1252 which passed, adds some real backbone into the fines that can be issued from \$1000 to up to \$25000, increase jail time, and increased fines

per fish for large scale striped bass poaching.

A shot fired toward to our neighbors to the south, Maryland sought to prohibit the selling, manufacturing or distribution of any product obtained from Menhaden (or bunker if you're from up North). While the bill ultimately died without a vote, it did put Omega (the largest commercial harvester of menhaden) that there's more than one way to get their attention.

For my fellow nimrods (the mighty hunter in the bible) it was a mixed bag as water fowlers say. HB 335 which passed will allow the junior hunt day to be a junior hunt weekend in those counties that allow Sunday hunting. A bill to clarify and make Sunday hunting easier in those counties that allow it instead of the current patchwork, unfortunately never gained traction.

As far as poaching with a gun or bow, those individuals who violate the law can sleep well at night. HB 301 would have put some bite into suspending the license of those convicted of multiple state or federal within a 12 month period. After some haggling in the house the bill passed, only to die in the senate. One would think a bill sponsored and supported by Delegate Wendell Bitzel (R) from

W MD and member of Sportsmen's Caucus; and Delegate Barbara Frush who has accolades from the animal's right crowd would be a slam dunk. Apparently the sportsmen community underestimated the lobby effort of illegal hunters. Also going down to defeat this session were bills in Harford County that would have changed the bow hunting safety zone from 150 yds to 75 yds, and increase Sundays for hunting.

While passing laws to increase fines and punishment for scofflaws of our natural resources is well and fine, it really doesn't mean much unless there are NRP officers in the field. Senate Bill 937- Number of Police officer was introduced requiring the governor to find money to staff the NRP police to their supposed staff level of 435 officers sometime in the future.

Refer back to my earlier statement that anything smelling of money was DOA. After being gutted to a mere shell of its former self, the bill after passing the Senate languished and died in the House of Delegates. Once again, sportsmen are left scratching their head and asking what good are laws worth if there's no one to enforce them. As a wise man once said, common sense ain't so common.

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"FISHIN' BACK EAST"

By Jim Gronaw



No doubt about it...spring has been slow and stubborn this year and many of our traditional fisheries have been slow to develop. The shad runs were late, spring rockfish on the flats was slow to develop and the almost constant rain just kept things goofy with lower than average temperatures and flooding and high waters during precious spawning times of many species. I for one am going to be real, real happy when warm weather is finally here. By the time you read this, it could be 100 degrees!

Lots of fishing to do in the early stages of summer. One of

my favorites has always been wading small tributary streams of the Potomac and Susquehanna watersheds and fishing for just about anything that swims. Although my intended quarry has always been smallmouth bass, I look at all the other species, to include a number of panfish, to be an added bonus and they sometimes save the day when the bass have clamed up.

I recently got to do some 'creek' panfishing when I got word on the street that there were some quality crappies to be had at Marsh Creek, a Monocacy River feeder that has produced well for me in the past. Marsh is a trout stocked trout stream in it's upper reaches above Gettysburg and has a variety of other game to include both bass groups, various sunfish, carp, cats and suckers as well. I fished the area around Sachs Covered Bridge and just enjoyed the



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notion of getting out and trying a new stream that wasn't terribly far away.

When I arrived, I noticed that there were lots of fish hanging out in and around the shade of the bridge and that spawning largemouths were here and there. These weren't big fish, but they were plentiful and the panfish be-

low in the shadows looked to have some size to them. Didn't matter, because my weapon of choice was a 5 foot ultralight spinning stick and 2 pound test Triple Fish mono and a handful of jigs. On my first cast a fat green sunfish nailed my 64th ounce jig and acted big despite his 7-inch length. The next

See Gronaw Page 17




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Gronaw ...

Continued from Page 16

several fish were either greenies, pumpkinseed sunfish or common bluegills. Some of the gills were decent, eight-inch class fish and the 'seeds were absolutely beautiful in spawning colors. Scampering up and down the shoreline. I spotted a diminutive smallmouth bass that must have lost its way during the recent high water. A well placed cast put the little guy on the bank and he acted just like his big brothers with spirited leaps that got him completely out of the water.

For a little over an hour I had steady action and ended up with over 20 fish for the brief effort. All the fish were fat and sassy and sported spawning hues of brilliant panfish colors. No, I didn't locate those crappies that were rumored, but I had a blast catching what was available. It wasn't the first time I had a blast on creek panfish.

It just makes sense that when it gets hot out that it is time to wet-wade for a variety of species. Surely, with smallies being the prime target, anglers are very likely to encounter some of the

bait on nighttime forays.

More often than not, big 'river sunnies' make up the bulk of the summer stream catch. Most species are the ever-abundant redbreasts sunfish... a southern favorite in slow, lazy streams throughout Dixie. They are very much at home in Mid-Atlantic creeks and streams, making up the majority of the catch in many of our local venues. Traditionally, they spawn about the first or second week in June and can be a riot on light spinning or flyrod gear, taking a variety of baits and lures. Many rivers sport fish from 7 1/2 to 9 inches and can fortify a decent fish fry. The best redbreast fishing I ever enjoyed was a large spawning shoal on the Monocacy River years ago as aggressive males just slammed our tiny crankbaits and jigs. We must have caught and released 50 or 60 sunnies before we called it an evening. Great fun!

With the current economic climate, and with so many creeks out there, it just seems right that targeting these fish could be a great angling resource for tough economic times. Sheesh, I did it years ago when I had more time and money. We always used ultra light spinning gear and favored 4 pound test lines with the Rebel Teeny Wee Crayfish being the



This Blue Gill fell to another jig on a 5 foot ultralight spinning stick.

smaller game as well. I can recall several trips where the rock bass, or redeye, has been the game saver and made up the bulk of the catch. These guys like small jigs that imitate crayfish and favor rocky areas or undercut banks with deteriorating tree root systems. At other times, the big minnow known as the fallfish would save the day. Big, silver members of the minnow family, they will strike spinners, jigs and small crankbaits with force. I am not so sure of their value, but I do know that catfishermen like them for cut

all time fish getter back in the day, and the day wasn't that long ago! Small hair jigs and twisters were also top choices, and the fly fisherman could have a ball if the bass were fussy.

Throw in a big carp or the occasional channel catfish and stream fishing can easily become a priority for those wanting lots of action with little payout. I enjoyed the Marsh Creek gig last month, and I am going to make a promise to myself to pursue more of that kind of fishing this year. How about you?



Brian Eder booked with Timberline Outfitters and bagged a nice Wyoming Antelope. Photo courtesy of Macrotech

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43.1 Pound Rockfish Wins 28th Annual Championship

**Kratz Reels
In \$45,000**

(PASADENA, MD) – The 28th annual Championship on the Chesapeake, the country's largest rockfish tournament, concluded today with 540 boats and approximately 4,000 anglers participating in this year's event. The Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association (MSSA), the largest sport fishing group in the state, once again hosted this event.

For three days, starting on April 29, anglers from all over the East Coast put their skills to the test as they experienced world class fishing on the Chesapeake Bay and competed for some significant cash prizes and the title of Champion.

This year's champion in the amateur division is Tom Disney of Severn, Maryland. Disney weighed in a 43.1 pound rockfish on the second day of the tournament at the Rod N Reel docks in Chesapeake Beach. Disney's catch secured him first place in the overall tournament and many of the additional skill levels bringing his total earnings to

\$24,825.

Second place went to Dan Rohleder of Centerville, Maryland who weighed in a 43.1 pound fish at Calvert Marina just after 2:00 P.M. on the first day of the tournament. While Rohleder came in second in the main tournament he was also able to secure many of the skill levels as well and will be taking home \$32,417.

Third place this year went to the 2010 MSSA Captain of the Year, Bill Kratz III of Millersville, Maryland. Kratz weighed in a 41.15 pound rockfish at Calvert Marina on the last day of the tournament. Kratz is the big money winner this year as he entered all of the skill levels bringing his total earnings to \$44,213.

Additionally John Weber of Bushwood, Maryland will also be taking home a considerable amount of money for his 40.4 pound rockfish. Weber entered in several of the skill levels and for that he will cash in for \$13,709.

Dave Smith, Executive Director of the Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association (MSSA) said they have increased the prizes in the Kid's division as well as the Catch and Release division. The top fifteen kids will receive fishing gear and merchandise as well as certifi-

cates congratulating them on their catch.

"If we don't get our youth involved in fishing and the outdoors our sport will be in serious trouble and fishing tournaments provide that opportunity to get kids involved", Smith said.

For the second year now text messaging was the primary communication between tournament officials and anglers. This new feature is something new to the sport and another example of responsible fishing

Maryland Saltwater Sport-

fishermen's Association 8461 Ft. Smallwood Rd, Suite C, Pasadena, MD 21122 - 410-255-5535 - www.mssa.net

MISSION OF THE MSSA:
The MSSA is working to provide a unified voice to preserve and protect the rights, traditions, and the future of recreational fishing tournament management.

The ability to communicate almost instantaneously with the anglers allows for more released fish.

"Texting is a great opportunity

See MSSA Page 19



Bill Kratz III of Millersville, Maryland. Kratz weighed in a 41.15 pound rockfish at Calvert Marina.

KAREN-RAY II

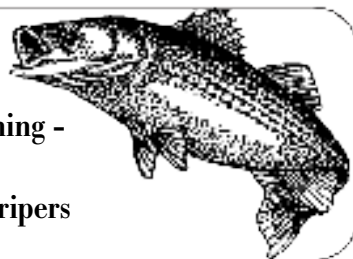
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MSSA ...

Continued from Page 18

to communicate with our tournament anglers and let them know what they need to have a chance at winning", Smith said.

The Catch and Release division was popular this year as anglers turned in their catch logs for a chance at some new fishing gear. The winner Chris Long will receive \$800 in gift cards from local tackle shops.

Recreational fishing and tournaments in specific generate huge amounts of money for local econo-

mies here in Maryland. That was evident by the thousands of people in Chesapeake Beach and Solomons Island this weekend for the tournament, not to mention the thousands that took to the water from all over Maryland to participate in this event.

Professional and Charter Boat Division

For the second year in a row the Champion in the Professional and Charter Boat division went to our own Captain Ed O'Brien. Captain O'Brien runs a charter boat, Semper Fidelis III, out of Chesapeake Beach, Maryland. Captain O'Brien weighed in a 43.6 pound rockfish taking home nearly \$6,000.

Second place went to Captain Tony Tolbard who brought in a 40.9 pound fish earning him \$1500 as he did not enter additional skill levels.

This year's big money winner went to third place, Captain Charlie Sisson of Backdraft who entered a 38.75 pound rockfish. Sisson placed 3rd in the main tournament and placed in several of the skill levels including the \$500 skill level which alone paid out \$5,200. In total Sisson will be taking home \$10,633.

All awards and cash will be given out at the awards ceremony on Thursday, May 12 at the Columbian Center in Severna Park starting

at 7:00 PM. All tournament anglers are invited as there are still prizes to be given out as "last chance awards" and door prizes. The big winners will receive checks and the Champion will receive the coveted Championship on the Chesapeake trophy.

For more information and a complete list of tournament results please visit www.mssa.net. All results are unofficial and subject to change until all anglers who have won \$5,000 or more pass their polygraph tests.

You can also contact Dave Smith at 410-255-5535.



Dan Rohleder of Centerville, Maryland who weighed in a 43.1 pound fish at Calvert Marina.



Captain Mark Hall of Rock Hall Fishing Charters caught a spring limit of stripers with Joey Clough and friends.

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12 Year Old Caitlyn Venker with her 340 lb. Hog taking in Pennsylvania (Photo Courtesy of Deer Creek Archery)

Mid Bay Report



By Chuck Prahl

Back in the "Old Days", we eagerly looked forward to regulated seasons for fresh-water fish. I remember April 15th was Opening Day for trout season and it was shoulder-to-shoulder on the stocked trout streams. Bass were also protected by regulations.

Saltwater and tidal fisheries were largely unregulated except for a very few regulations like a tidal pickerel season, and striped bass over 15 pounds and under 11 inches. Creel limits were mostly unheard of except for some freshwater fish residing in tidal waters.

Striped bass has become one of Maryland's most well-protected fish. It has multiple seasons, size, and creel limits as well as sectors in the Chesapeake where it can or cannot be caught.

Here in the estuaries and especially in the Big Choptank, June 1st has become a highly awaited date for light tackle anglers. That's when we can catch and keep stripers in all portions of the tidal Bay, as long as they are at least 18 inches. You can keep two, but only one may exceed 28 inches. I have not been restricted by that portion of the law very often.

June in the Big Choptank can be quite rewarding until the heat drives many of the fish into the Bay proper. It's not at all like fall fishing, when young menhaden have reached a size that interests larger stripers.

In the rivers, spring and early summer rockfish forage inshore on small crabs, grass shrimp, adult silversides, and bull minnows along with an occasional white perch. In

deeper water, especially on shell bottom, rockfish root in the shell for mud crabs, worms, blue crab, and varieties of shrimp, but they are always inclined to hit larger silversides and young-of-the-year perch and menhaden.

You'll find very little bird activity. You must rely more on your knowledge of river bottom that attracts stripers. Live bait, like peeler crab and bloodworms, is very effective on deeper shell bottom. Fish it with light lead and longer snelled hooks (2/0 - 4/0). White perch will be stealing your offerings, but when the stripers home-in on your bait, the perch back off.

Bottom fishing in June will

See Prahl Page 21




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Prahl ...

Continued from Page 20

also net you some of the best croaker fishing of the season. June finds them throughout the estuaries. They are ravenous for nourishment. While squid, jumbo shrimp, and bloodworms will take them, peeler crab will guarantee you a better shot at stripers. They forage together on good bottom.

When fishing for stripers in the shallows, I tend to throw lures that resemble adult silversides. My favorite, the "Rip Tide Mullet" is narrow and the 4-inch version properly imitates the silverside. A 3/8 oz. big-eyed jig head adds enough weight to cast it accurately.

In deeper waters, I use a bucktail. Again, I feel a smaller (5/8 - 1-oz.) version to be more effective. It helps to know where stripers congregate.

Rock piles, oyster mounds, and other underwater structure that can be pinpointed by the Depth Finder and GPS are places that produce stripers in June. You'll need a repertoire of these spots for consistent

success. Drifting and casting work well, but constantly starting the engine to run up-tide or up-wind to start another drift can turn stripers off. Try anchoring within a long cast of the target for a more stealthy tactic.

As the month of June wears on, stripers pull back from the shallows and retreat from the deeper river structure. Most will end up in the Main Bay for the remainder of the summer. A few can be caught in the estuaries throughout the summer, giving perch and croaker fishermen an occasional thrill.

A healthy crab population awaits recreational crabbers in June. The new regulations have given us back a fishery that promises to make recreational crabbing actually fun again. Big Choptank trot lining can be pretty slow in early June, but by the end of the month it should be hot. A 1200-ft. line can generate enough crabs for a family feast once you can establish a productive lay.

Actually, 1200-ft. is a rather short line, but it's all you're allowed. An overhaul might take 10 minutes, then after culling you're wondering what to do before another overhaul. The line should be

idle at least 20-30 minutes. I would suggest setting some traps nearby to kill some time and also add a few crabs to the basket.

Novice trot liners have to overcome a mountain of problems presented by a baited line and the bait itself. One of the easiest solutions for keeping a baited line from deterioration is to freeze it along with the bait. A 5-gallon bucket barely holds a baited line and still fits in a freezer.

If that scenario is not an option, then the line needs to be salted. Cheap salt in large bags are usually available where you buy bait. Crabbers usually feed the line into a brine barrel which because of its weight, needs to be kept aboard. However, if you are using your boat for other recreational purposes (fishing, cruising), then you'll need to clear the crabbing gear from the boat.

In that case, some crabbers dip each bait into dry salt as they transfer the line to another bucket or they sprinkle salt on each layer as the line is laid carefully in neat, even circles. I say "neat", because the next time you put out the line, it will be feeding from that bucket and that should be a smooth, problem-free operation. It seldom is because tangles are always showing up, causing delays as you deploy the line. This is when most of us mutter some choice words, which seldom help solve the situation.

Choice of bait is a matter of trial and error. Chicken necks are the most popular, then bull lips, which are more work but very durable. Eel is expensive but probably the best. Fish are good, but very tender.

A lot of work, yes, but fun and the rewards are more than worth the effort.



This 8 1/2" bearded hen was harvested May 13, 2011 by Keith Devantier in Queen Anne's County Maryland with We Got Em' Guide Service..

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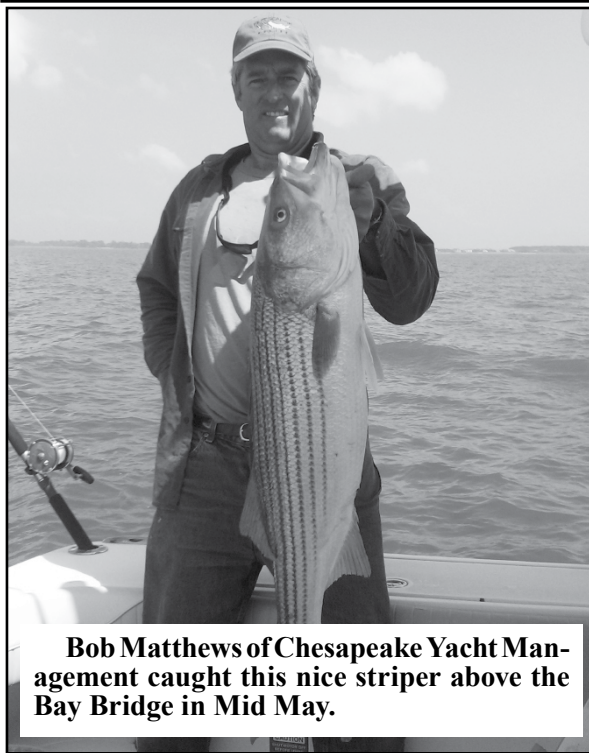
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Bob Matthews of Chesapeake Yacht Management caught this nice striper above the Bay Bridge in Mid May.



Tasty Venison Roast Seasoning Rub Meal

Ingredients: 1.5 lb. venison roast (we used front shoulder and slow cooked it on the bone), 2 heaping T. Venison Roast Seasoning Rub (Sportsman's Table Item number CY3627), 2 heaping T. Merlot Fine Wine Jelly (Sportsman's Table Item number MWJ01), 2 cups of water, 1 large potato, 1 large sweet potato, 2 large celery stalks, 2 large carrots, 1 medium red onion, 1- 8oz. mushrooms, 1 T. corn starch.

Prep Time: 20

Cook Time: 5-6 hours

Ready In: 6 hours 20 min

Yields: 6

Directions: Dice vegetables to desired size, we cut about 1-1.5 inch chunks. Place all ingredients in crock pot. Stir well. Cook on low for 5-6 hours. Stir several times during cooking if possible. During the last hour of cooking, remove 2-3 T. of broth and place in a small dish with a lid. Add corn starch to dish and shake to mix. Add this mixture back into crock pot. Stir and cook for last hour to thicken to a nice gravy. Thicken as desired. Enjoy with nice, fresh crusty bread.

Recipe submitted by Sportsman's Table, the outdoor enthusiast's resource for preparing, cooking and serving fish and game, located in Hellertown PA. For more information Visit www.SportsMansTable.com or Call 1-866-640-6802.

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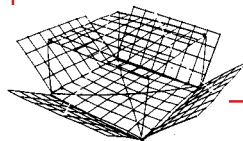
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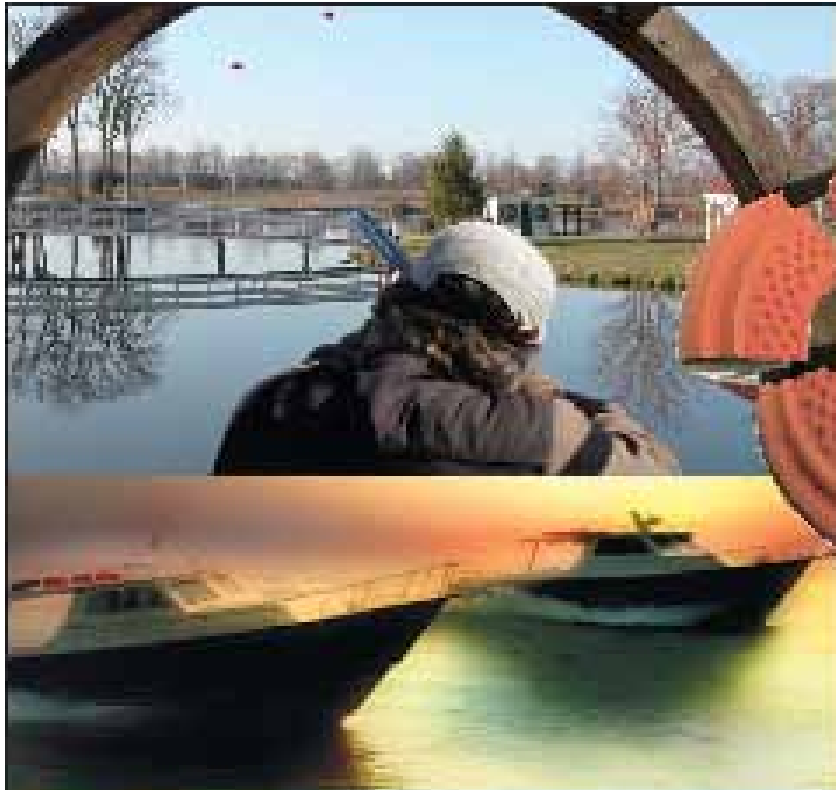
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August 17 & 18 - age 13-17

Tournaments

Sporting Clay Tournaments

June 5th / Take a Kid Outdoors Benefit Shoot- 50 Targets

June 19th / Cecil Co. Father's Day Shoot - 50 Targets

July 9th / Queen Anne Co. DU shoot - 75 Targets

July 17th / NSCA Schraders Open - 100 Targets

July 30th / 11th Annual Sudlersville Runan - 50 Targets

3D Archery Shoots

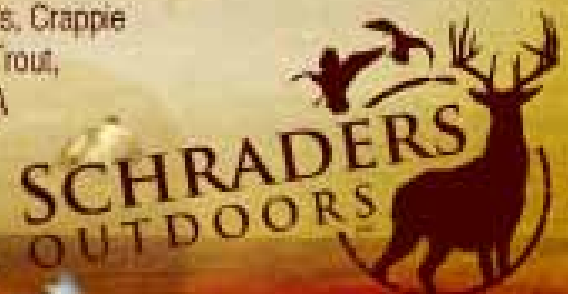
June 18 & 19 / Father's Day 3D Shoot

July 23 & 24 / Firecracker 3D Shoot

Fishing

Freshwater Fishing - Fish in one of our private farm ponds for Bass, Bluegills, Crappie and catfish - \$50 per person/ per day | Bay Sport Fishing - Stripers, Blues, Trout, perch, Croaker- \$450 1/2 day | Big Game Fishing - Out of Virginia Beach, VA and Tuna, Dolphin, Wahoo, Marlin out of Hatteras, NC

Gift Certificates Available!



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