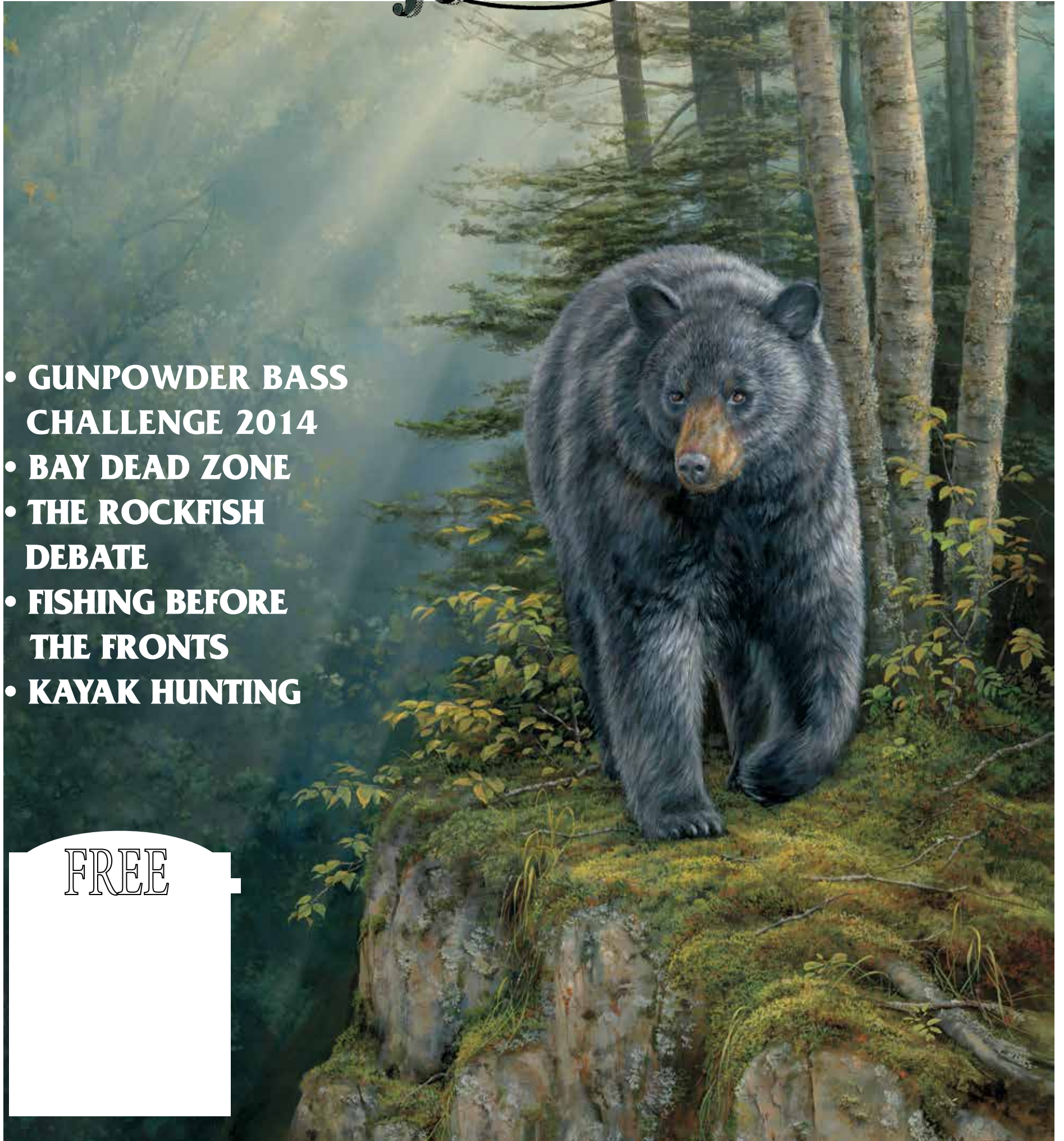


Fishing & Hunting

Journal

- GUNPOWDER BASS CHALLENGE 2014
- BAY DEAD ZONE
- THE ROCKFISH DEBATE
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“Hooked on Fishing”

The Art of the Retrieve

By Lenny Rudow

In the last episode of Got Bait? we put live spot up against BKD jigs, while fishing for stripers on the Chesapeake. Spoiler alert: the BKDs kicked butt. (What’s Got Bait? It’s a new fishing series featuring the Rudow boys and their guest anglers, who divvy up into “Team Bait” and “Team Lures” then have a fish-off. It’s entertaining, it’s educational, and I guarantee it’s unlike any fishing show you’ve ever seen before—just go to YouTube and type “Got Bait?” into the search box, to find it).

Our guest fisherman for this episode was Shawn Kimbro, the author of Chesapeake Light Tackle, and watching the way he retrieves got me thinking about retrieve styles in general. Note: Shawn reels in his lures with a shockingly violent jigging action. In fact, it looks like he’s trying to flail the fish into submission with his rod tip, and the first time I saw him fish I figured I’d catch five times as many rock as he would. Wrong! This guy slays ‘em, and by my best estimations, I only catch four times as many fish as he does (but who’s counting?)

How big an effect does the way you retrieve have? I’m sure you’ve been on a boat where everyone’s casting the same type of lure, with the same type of gear, and one guy (me) seems to catch way more fish than everyone else. Some other guy (Shawn) barely gets any bites at all. The effect of a regular (or irregular) twitch of the rod tip, a faster (or slower) crank of the reel handle, or a bottom-bouncing (or surface-piercing) retrieve can make the difference between a full cooler, or an empty box. So I thought it would be interesting to examine some of the different species we chase after in Maryland’s waters, and what kind of retrieve(s) send them into feeding mode.

Bluefish – If you’re fishing with a soft

plastic lure, blues will hit it and bite it in half no matter how you retrieve it. If you tie on a trace of wire and use a metal spoon, they won’t hit it no matter how you retrieve it. Seriously though, these always-hungry fish seem to strike just about anything at any time, and if there’s any one species for which retrieve style and speed doesn’t seem to matter much, this is it. One note: if you’re retrieve with a lift-drop style to yo-yo a lure as it moves through the water, you’ll have a lot more bite-offs than if you retrieve quickly and/or steadily because blues will attack the lure head-first as it sinks, and almost always get your line between their teeth.

Flounder – Considering that these fish spend a lot of time laying on the bottom, they like a surprisingly active retrieve. In the bay, rapidly popping lures several feet up off the bottom and then allowing them to free-fall back down is extremely effective. Strangely, in coastal bays they do seem to react better to lures that are gently



Flounder are an oddity; which retrieve they like the most changes, from the Chesapeake to coastal bays.

lifted off bottom before being allowed to sink back down.

Gray Trout – This is one of the few species out there which often likes a slow, steady retrieve, particularly when they’re

staging in deep water. In fact, sometimes “dead-sticking” (when you simply allow your lure to hang above bottom) is the most effective way to catch these fish.

Red Drum – Reds usually hit best with a steady retrieve, but this is a function of vibration more than anything else. Savvy drum anglers use blade-baits, spoons, paddle-tails, and other lures that send out vibrations. Reds key in on vibrations quite well, so giving this type of lure a steady retrieve allows the fish to home in on your lure as it moves through the water.

Spanish Mackerel – Faster is better, period. Spanish like a speedy lure, and it’s physically impossible to reel one in quickly enough that these fish can’t catch it. Also, remember that in Chesapeake country we generally catch them up top on the surface, so waiting for the lure to sink before beginning that speedy retrieve is unnecessary and probably detrimental. This is strange since in many other areas the best way to catch Spanish is to troll spoons behind planers that take them 10’ or 15’ down beneath the surface, but at least around here, bites up top account for 80 or 90 percent of the fish you’ll catch. Tip: try small gold spoons; these almost always out-catch silver spoons, for some reason.

Speckled Sea Trout – This is one species that changes its preference with every change of the tide. At times they strike best when a lure is retrieved slowly and steadily along the bottom, and at other times, the craziest, most erratic action you can engender will generate the most bites. The best way to target specks on any given day is to change tactics with virtually every cast, until you learn what works the best. If the bites slow down, particularly if the tide changed recently, start experimenting again.

Stripers – Always remember that rock-fish are temperature-sensitive, and water temps will have a dramatic effect on what style of retrieve works best. Generally speaking, in cold water slower is better and in warm water, faster is better. Usually, a crank-crank-twitch-twitch style of retrieve is my choice of action. In extreme temperatures and during a dramatic rise in barometric pressure, bouncing the lure along the bottom is often your best bet. And in virtually all situations where you have a strong current, retrieving into or

across the current is more effective than retrieving with the current. As I mentioned before, Kimbro takes a very different approach. Did I really catch four times as many fish as him, while we filmed Got Bait? You’ll have to watch it, to find out.



Speckled trout like a fast retrieve one day, and a slow one the next.

Please don’t watch it.

Remember, all of the above recommendations are meant as rule-of-thumb, not as “hard” statement of fact. One of the beautiful things about fishing is that you never know what will happen next, or what will work best. On some days, none of the rules seem to apply. The bottom line? Start off a day of fishing using the tried and true methods, and if they aren’t producing, experiment until you discover what works.



Consider water temps, when retrieving for stripers.

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Fishing & Hunting Journal

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FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

As people look around and see the plight of our nation, they often leap to the question, "Where is God?" Is God powerless to do something? Why does He allow certain wrongs to go unchecked?

A great truth for all of us to realize is that God is omnipresent – God is everywhere. God never has to go anywhere. Jeremiah 23:24 says, "Can God hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? Saith the Lord."

Many think of God just inside the church house, yet God is always with us. There is not a movement God does not see. There is not a motive He does not know. There is not a word he does not understand. Think of all the words men speak, yet God hears all of them.

There is not any power that can separate us from God. Not even death can separate us. To close our eyes on earth is to open our eyes to God in Heaven. Distance can never separate us from God, because God is everywhere.

God has a plan for this world, and His purpose will never be thwarted. In the fullness of time, God will work His plan. There are no clocks in Heaven, no calendars by which to run the course of this world.

We Americans are by no means a patient crowd. However, God cannot and will not be hurried. We have always trusted Him before and we must trust Him now. It is time all of us from the White House to the church house to trust God and lean not upon our own understanding but acknowledge Him, trust Him, and He will direct our paths.

This was the faith of our fathers and I trust that it is yours.

Pastor - --MEL BRINDLEY

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Bay dead zone made big comeback in August

The dead zone that largely disappeared from the Bay earlier this summer made a dramatic comeback in August when oxygen-starved water covered a much greater area of the Chesapeake than normal.

Typically, the dead zone reaches its peak during early summer, when large amounts of nutrients flushed into the Bay during the spring fuel large algae blooms. When the algae die, they sink to the bottom where they are decomposed by bacteria which draw oxygen out of the water, creating the deep-water dead zone. Normally, those conditions are relieved by late summer storms that mix bottom water with oxygen-rich water from the surface.

This year, the opposite happened. Hurricane Arthur passed near the region in early July, stirring up the water. That resulted in the smallest July dead zone in 30 years of monitoring, according to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

But water quality monitoring done in early and late August showed an area of hypoxic water that covered 1.32 cubic miles of the mainstem of the Chesapeake. That was the fifth largest early August dead zone, and the eighth largest late August dead zone observed during the last 30 years, according to DNR scientists.

The volume of the mainstem — which does not include the tidal portions of tributaries — is about 31 cubic miles. (Hypoxic water has less than 2 milligrams of dissolved oxygen per liter of water. Fish, like striped bass, typically like at least 5 mg/l.)

That is roughly in line with a forecast made in late spring, which anticipated slightly worse than average oxygen conditions this year as the result of higher-than-average nitrogen loads that entered the Bay this spring.

More water quality data can be found on the DNR's Eyes on the Bay website.

Maryland Anglers Set New White Perch and Cobia State Records

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Service has certified a new freshwater division white perch record and an Atlantic division cobia record.

On September 5, James Stiers of Baldwin caught a 1.7-pound white perch in the Loch Raven Reservoir, breaking the previous record of 1.62 pounds set by John Williams



James Stiers and his record white perch

in 2008 also in Loch Raven.

"It was my first cast of the day," he said. "I was using a Shad Rat crank-bait, and I thought I had a largemouth bass on the line. When I saw it was a perch, I knew it could be a record."

He dropped by the Crab Truck & Seafood Stop in Fallston on his way home to get the fish weighed on a certified scale. The following weekend he met DNR biologist Keith Lockwood at the Maryland Fishing Challenge Finale at Sandy Point State Park to have

the species certified, completing the process and earning him this State record.

Stiers fishes Loch Raven two to three times a week in the warmer months. He says, "I'm sure there's bigger perch



Jack Latimar and his record cobia

in there."

That same day near Ocean City, Jack Latimer of Potomac caught a 79-pound cobia about a mile and a half east of the inlet while fishing with Steve Magassy in a 16-foot skiff.

"We had been out about five miles east of Ocean City fishing for flounder and were on the way back in when we saw the fish on the surface," Latimer said. He and Magassy simply used what they had and cast out a couple of bucktail jigs tipped with soft-plastic twister tails. "One of the fish took my lure, and that was about it," Latimer added.

They returned to AKE Marina in Ocean City where DNR fisheries biologist Steve Doctor joined them to confirm the species and the weight. The fish was 60 inches long with a girth of 30 inches.

DNR maintains State records for sport fish in three divisions — Atlantic, Chesapeake and freshwater — and awards plaques to anglers who achieve new record catches. To report a potential state record catch, call 443-569-1381 or 410-260-8325. Anglers should keep their fish immersed in ice water to preserve its weight until it can be checked, which can be done at a seafood retailer or a grocery store with a certified scale.

Fish caught from privately-owned, fee-fishing waters are not eligible for record consideration.

The Maryland State Record application and a list of records are located on the DNR Fisheries website.

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“Tackle Box Tim”

Gunpowder Bass Challenge 2014

By Tim Sherman

One of my favorite outings of the year is the Gunpowder Bass Challenge. It allows me to ride along with an angler in a one-man tournament scenario on a body of water with designated boundaries. I get to witness firsthand the thought process of a fisherman as he pits his knowledge of bass and the fisheries in which it lives.

The 2014 challenger is Captain Dan Kardash, a retired bass guide, tournament angler, and steward of all things bass on the upper Chesapeake. Over the years, he has concentrated on the Susquehanna River and Flats, the Northeast, Elk and Sassafras Rivers. I asked him how long it has been since he has fished on the Gunpowder. He replied, “It’s been so long I can’t remember.”

We fished on August 20 with a low tide scheduled for 12:09 pm at Battery Point. The forecast called for a mix of clouds and sun with a high temperature of 85 degrees. Yes, there was a bit of high pressure, but it had been the norm for a few days.

The boundaries for the event remain the same as always: Seneca Creek to the south and Rickett’s Point in the Gunpowder to the north. This expansive area includes, Dundee and Saltpeter Creeks, and as far into the Gunpowder and her creeks and coves as Captain Dan wishes to wander. He has 8 hours to catch as many bass as he can, and the weight from his 5 biggest bass will count.

6:08 a.m. Dan fired up the motor at Mariner Point Park’s ramp and we started down the canal. His game plan was to fish the flat at the mouth of the canal, go dock hopping along the Baltimore County side, and cast to the rocks at Maxwell Point.

6:18 We reach the mouth of the canal. Dan deploys the trolling motor and casts a swimming leg frog over the grassy flat. We’ve got plenty of cloud cover, so the bait is a great choice.

6:22 Dan sees the tide starting to flow. “The grass is starting to lay over.”

6:24 He switches to a Spro popping frog.

6:28 He sticks his rod tip into the river. “Nothing beats a G. Loomis depth finder,” he joked.

6:41 Working along the flat, Kardash switches to a Zoom Super Hog and pitches it to visible sunken wood.

6:51 He alternates between a pearl colored Senko and the Hog.

6:55 He is a bit bewildered that he hasn’t had a bite with all the baitfish activity he is seeing on the flat.

6:58 Dan reaches a huge tree

stuck on the flat and switches to the Spro frog. He places his first cast perfectly behind the tree. Within the first couple of pops a bass takes down the frog. Dan sets the hook, the rod bends momentarily but the bass gets off.

7:08 Dan has fished all angles of the tree and switches to the Super Hog.

7:18 Shaking off the thought of the missed bass, Kardash works his way up into the canal leading to the Joppatowne quarry. He casts the popping frog to shoreline deadfalls.

7:22 He snags the frog on the sunken wood. “How do you get a frog stuck on a tree. Take a note so I can register a complaint with Spro,” he quips.

7:28 Dan pitches the hog lure to the grass line in the canal.

7:34 “The grass doesn’t seem to be it.” He turns and pitches the hog to wood targets as he works farther up the canal.

7:50 A sizable bass feeds along at the surface twice in a minute. Dan casts a chartreuse/white Xciter spinnerbait to areas where the bass broke the surface, but the bass wasn’t interested.

7:55 Dan works his way back to the big tree with the popping frog.

8:00 He dissects the tree from every possible angle with the spinnerbait, but it goes completely ignored.

8:05 We chug across the flat to the railroad bridge so Kardash can work the piers on the Baltimore County side of the river.

8:15 At the first pier, Dan picks up a rod with his trusted green pumpkin 1/4-ounce Bitsy Bug jig adorned with a matching Zoom Fat Albert double tail grub. He is diligently picking apart pilings and posts of docks as he works up river. He is making mental notes as to which of the docks have secondary cover under and around them.

8:32 Dan detects a bite and sets the hook but does not connect.

9:00 Working the jig under a pier, Dan snags the jig and has to break it off. He continues along with the Super Hog.

9:15 He ties on another Bitsy Bug and focuses on “T” piers (those with 90-degree decking on the ends). Dan comments, “The Bitsy Bug is doing its Job. It’s found everything under the docks -- except bass.”

9:20 Kardash goes back to the beginning stretch of docks and works over those with secondary cover.

9:36 Other than the one bite, the piers haven’t produced. He heads across the river to Maxwell Point.

9:40 Dan reaches into his rod locker and pulls out a crankbait rod with a KVD 1.5 square bill crankbait tied on. He lays the rod down on the deck for later use. He then picks up the spinnerbait and casts to the shoreline rocks.

9:45 Dan’s rod loads up and we

land the first bass of the day: a 1.12-pound bass. It’s a small one, but it gets the skunk off of the boat.

9:48 Noting subtle changes along the bank, Kardash switches to the crankbait.

10:02 He switches back to the spinnerbait and works wood and rocks until he reaches the buoys marking restricted waters.

10:19 Dan has worked his way back to the point without another bite. He pulls the trolling motor and we head across the river.

10:24 Kardash works a sunken rock pile on the downriver side of the Gunpowder Falls State Park. Many folks know about it but it has been

blades.”

12:44 He’s had enough of the sparse grass bed. He ties on a fresh hog lure and rigs another rod with a beaver style plastic bait, all the while collection his thoughts.

12:54 Dan has made a run back to the piers downriver from the railroad bridge. Because the sun is out, he believes he has a better chance for bass to be under them.

1:34 Kardash has finished fishing the line of docks with the hog and beaver baits without a bite. With a little more than a half-hour to go, he heads to the Harford county side of the bridge.

1:39 We start close to the channel.



Captain Dan Kardash shows the only bass he caught during this year’s Gunpowder bass challenge.

good to him in the past.

11:03 Dan has circumnavigated the rock pile several times. He’s cast the spinnerbait, crankbait, and pitched the jig to no avail. (Editor’s note: Normally this cove has several nice grass beds. This year there are none.) He’s convinced that he’s done his best here and we head upriver.

11:13 We reached the piers on the Baltimore county side upriver from the railroad bridge. The first thing that is noticeable is that there is some vegetation around them. And, the sun is finally breaking through the overcast. Dan goes to work with the Bitsy Bug.

11:48 Dan has intently fish docks for more than 30 minutes without a sniff. He’s had a tough go of it so far.

11:52 We’ve made a short run back to the railroad bridge. The tide is in the last few minutes of the ebb.

12:17 p.m. Kardash has worked toward the middle of the bridge. He’s thoroughly covered the front and sides of every piling platform with the jig. He’s seen enough concrete and he’s ready for another move.

12:24 We’ve made a run to the Edgewood side of the river. The tide has turned and we are hoping that the fishing will also. Dan starts at the pier and works the spinnerbait over the grass bed that is only visible with the depth finder. (Editor’s note: in years past, this cove has been lush with milfoil and eelgrass.)

12:33 Dan feels a faint tap on the spinnerbait and says, “It hit the

Dan works across the faces of the columns toward the long sunken tree limb where Tom Wewerka caught his 5.5-pound bass in last year’s challenge. Dan is casting the beaver bait parallel to the long side of the columns.

1:45 He reaches the limb and pitches the beaver bait. He lure quickly becomes snagged. He breaks it off and switches to the Bitsy Bug.

1:50 “That tree is hungry. It ate my jig, too,” Dan says with a bit of frustration.

11:53 With 15 minutes left, Kardash works back toward the channel with a crankbait and the hog lure.

2:08 Time for the challenge is up. Dan is grateful for the one bass that he was able to get to the boat. We are greeted at the bridge by Tom Wewerka and Frank McNalty. Dan laments that he’s had a truly tough day.

Looking back on the day from my prospective, the Gunpowder River fishery was not what it has been in past years. The only considerable vegetation was upriver from the railroad bridge. The lush beds on the Edgewood side and on the backside of the state park were non-existent. Dan fished hard on this day to catch the single 1.12-pound bass. Captain Dan never lost focus or lacked confidence in his game plan. Unfortunately the fishery was not so kind to him. Hopefully next year’s challenger will find better conditions.

Mark & Taylor Dierly



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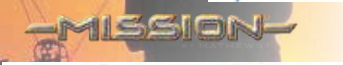
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Bill Megason and Mark Wheatley with two of the 18 'bruiser Red Drum' they caught aboard the 'Kingfish II' 9-27-14 while fishing the middle bay.

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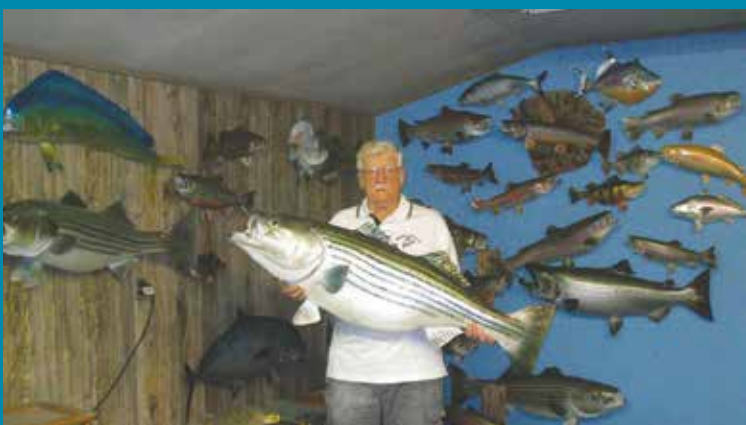
Fish lesions, other problems are cause for worry

Evidence can be found in the unusually widespread frequency of fish lesions, excessive mortality and intersex fish. Male fish containing eggs in their testes have been found nationwide, including Pennsylvania's major watersheds, according to U.S. Geological Survey research. These problems plaguing fish and other aquatic life should be signs the water we rely on for drinking is also in trouble.



The likely culprits are endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) that upset the endocrine system, which regulates hormones and the reproductive system. The sources of these chemicals are complex mixtures from agricultural animal wastes, pesticides and herbicides, and human sources from wastewater treatment plant effluent and other sewage discharges, according to Vicki Blazer, fish biologist and lead Pennsylvania study author. Low-dose exposure to EDCs at sensitive life stages can have long-term effects, including reproductive impairment, reduced disease resistance and early mortality.

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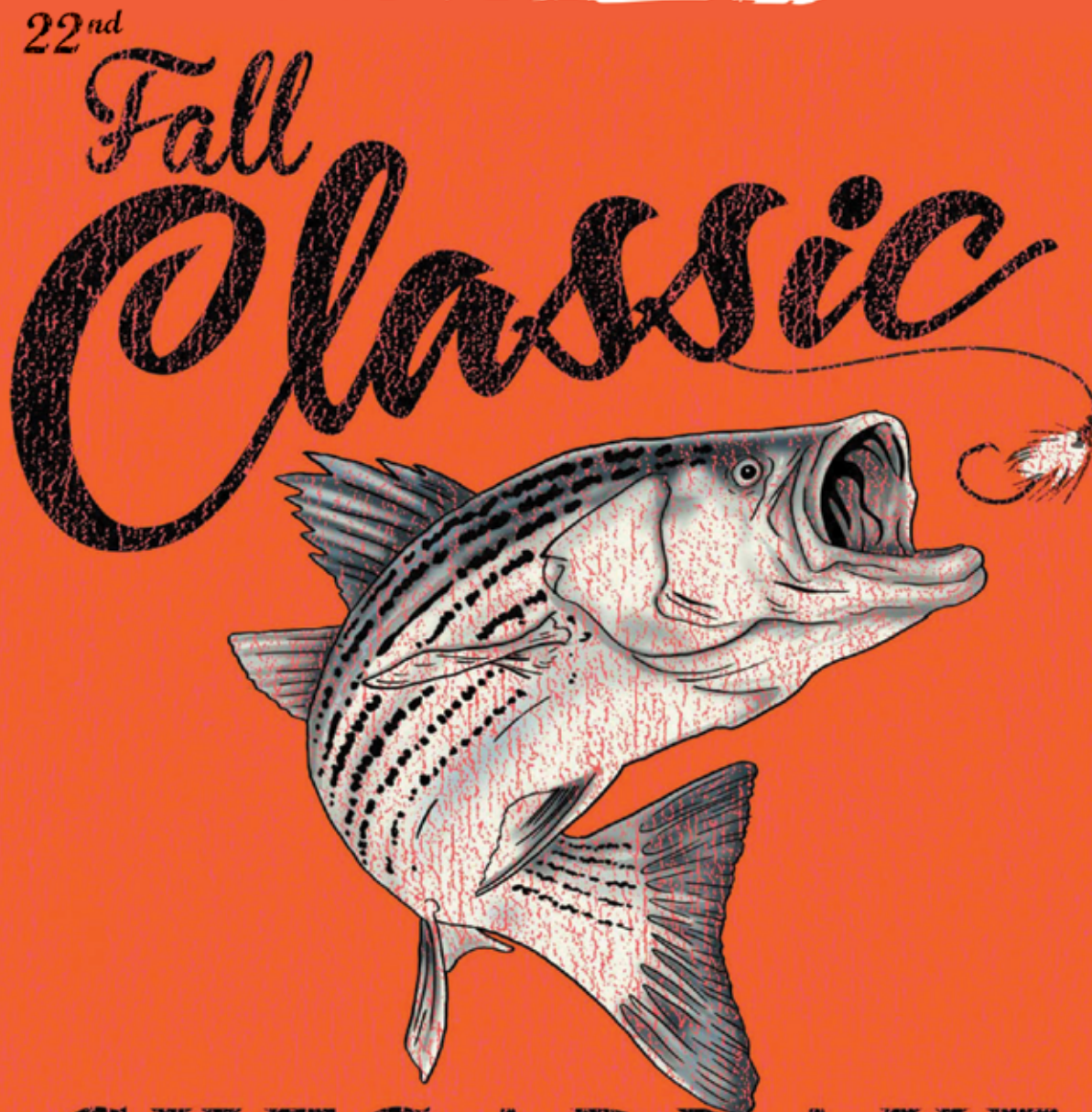
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boat was acting as a gear shelf in my garage for my kayak stuff more often than not. The reason for this transition is that hunting out of my kayak as opposed to my Jon boat has made me hunt more efficiently and effectively.

A few years back, a couple buddies and I headed across the river in search of some black ducks well before light. We stuck to our usual route and usual plan but soon noticed that birds were dropping in about 100

yards from us in a nice little hole we knew was just a bit too shallow for the boat. Well, we tried it anyway. After sitting on a mud flat for the next few hours, disgusted at our attempt and continuing to watch birds fall in, I thought to myself, "why didn't I bring my kayak, it would float in that little bit of water for sure." As we closed the day with well less than a limit of birds, I decided to change up for the next hunt.

The following weekend I decided to forego the early drive to the local boat ramp and the jockeying for position to put over. I also decided to leave the extra gear at home that I would typically have to spend a good amount of Friday night getting together for a boat ride. No, this time I just threw the kayak in the truck with enough decoys to make a presence on the water and hit up a location that doesn't even have a boat ramp.

Photo credit to Jeff Little.



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72 acre Taylor's Island Farm: Mostly tillable ground with two large 5 +/- acre waterfowl impoundments, and two small holding ponds. Excellent Waterfowl Property with some sika, whitetail, and turkey. Asking \$499,000.

58 +/- Acre Property: Located in Crapo, Md consists of woodland and marsh, one flooded impoundment for ducks, and one per **SOLD** woods. 5 acre open space allows for another pond. Perfect habitat for waterfowl, whitetail, sika, and turkeys. A real sportsman's paradise. Asking \$249,000.

270 Acre Dorchester County Marsh that is boat access only. This property is an excellent waterfowl and sika deer property. Asking \$295,000.

390 Acres Timber: Dorchester County. The tract of timber consists of .3 acres of ponds, 1.5 acres of food plots for Deer and Turkeys. Perfect investment for timber harvesting or deer and turkey hunting. Asking \$995,000.

135 Acre Talbot County Farm with roughly 70+/- tillable acres with the remainder in woods. Great location for goose, duck, deer, and turkeys. Asking \$938,250.

Green Marsh Point: 33.15 Acres with huge westerly views across the Bay to Poplar Island. Large mature trees, sandy beach, marsh and 4+/- mlw complete this listing. Asking \$625,000.

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While others were likely still at the ramp slinging any number of bags and gear in their boat, I was pulling up to a guard rail on the road shoulder then swiftly making a brief paddle to a good spot. As I sat listening to motors hum in the distance and watched spotlights flash for the chance of an open piece of marsh, I knew my spot was set and ready long before legal shooting time. Needless to say, that day ended with a full bag. My kayak had afforded me a quick entry, easy decoy set-up, and an advantage over the guys who had a lengthy boat ride to the same area.

Before my emersion into the kayak world, my duck hunts were either on foot or in a Jon boat. Don't get me wrong, my 14' Jon holds a special place in the garage and still gets use when I want to bring others. But my kayak experience has evolved from more than just using one as an overgrown decoy sled or skinny water transport, to a purposefully built and rigged hunting platform.

Plenty of guys are out there in poke boats, canoes, and other paddle craft, and have been since aboriginal man took to the water in search of fish and game. But kayak designs have come a long way. Today's manufacturers of-

fer a wide variety of special purpose vessels designed for just what you need. The options are only limited by how far you want to take your custom rigging. My current go to rig is the Wilderness Systems Ride. It's offered in 11.5' and 13.5' lengths, a wide pontoon style hull that offers more than adequate stability and a weight capacity of up to 550 pounds. Although I'm a paddle purist, plenty of kayak specific options exist to rig up with kayak specific motor kits to get there faster.

Have you ever driven by a real ducky looking spot and thought, "Man if I could put over right there!"? Well assuming you can get permission, a kayak can be an easy way to get into some of the best locations Mother Nature has to offer. Most kayaks by their design draw much less water than traditional boats. The ability to handle your rig by hand across land and water is a big advantage in certain situations.

One of my favorite early season locations for woodies on Maryland's Eastern Shore is a large WMA with a puzzle piece network of old mining ponds with some of the best being a pretty good hike. I used to walk it with a backpack of decoys and a

fishing pole with a treble hook to retrieve my birds. I always wanted to get out to the little islands in the middle or be able to retrieve a downed bird with ease. I don't hunt with a dog, so my kayak affords me that ability on such a property and many others.

Speaking of dogs, there are plenty of my kayak hunting friends that carry their pooch along in the tank well area behind the cockpits of their kayaks. With the capacity and stability of today's sportsman's kayak, this is possible. Once you get comfortable in your kayak you'll realize that they are much more than the tipsy rollover-prone toys you might be picturing. Furthermore, shooting while seated is not a problem if you have the right boat under you. You can go all out with a blind design of your own, simply camo up and stay still, or go with a pre-made kit. I have recently rigged up a flip-down style blind that provides plenty of cover while still making shooting a breeze, and is easily pushed out of the way to paddle.

Of course I recommend getting used to your rig before cold weather sets in. It's a good idea (in summer) to get in and lean as far as you can over to the water to see just were the stability breaks. It's likely that you will slide off the seat into the water long before the boat actually flips. You will no doubt be surprised at how hard you need to intentionally lean on it to get it to flip.

Hunting from a kayak offers a different perspective of the outdoors, and in my opinion, a more intimate

experience. Imagine sitting mere inches off the water in a position not too far from what a layout blind gives you and letting the birds cup and commit. Send your dog, wade out, or my favorite; grab your paddle, stay relaxed in the comfortable seat and be back in position for the next group in no time. And I'm just scratching the surface here. Floating to locate turkeys in the spring, slowly making your way through Sika deer habitat, and any number of hunting situations can be done in a kayak. Not to mention if you haven't had the pleasure of kayak fishing, you'll be hooked the first time you get a free tow from the fish. It's awesome.

As with anything, there's plenty of information on the web about this sport. Check it out! If you know a friend with an extra kayak take him up on that invitation this season. If you're in the market, talk with a knowledgeable local kayak dealer. They have the experience and inside information to put you in the appropriate boat for what you want to do with it.

Come learn from other folks who are already into it. Take a look at rigging options, blinds, bag limits, and stories to share. You can find us on the Facebook Group; "Kayak Hunting".

*Good luck and good hunting,
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Joseph Hilton bagged this beautiful 8-point buck in Mechanicsville MD.



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FISHING BEFORE THE FRONTS...DOES WEATHER REALLY MATTER?

By Jim Gronaw

I saw that the Weather Channel was forecasting a major nor’easter and that rain would continue for several days. We had been in the grips of an early fall heat wave with 90 degree weather and humidity... a mini drought, if you could call it that. Over the next 24 hours things were about to change, and do so drastically. I made plans.

With temperatures to drop, cloud cover to increase and winds to pick up, I figured my best chance to make a decent catch was to fish ahead of the front, before any substantial rain and falling temperatures would cause a complete washout. I had four hours... time to make a move. With a couple plastic containers of worms and a pair of ultra light spinning outfits, I made my way to one of my favorite central Maryland public fishing lakes in quest of panfish action. Just to see if the fish might turn on and make it a good outing, I pitched out a simple bobber/worm rig and let it bounce along naturally with the chop of the wind. I was not ready for what would happen.

The short story went like this... 118 total fish, mostly bluegills, red ear sunfish, catfish and crappies. Many were small, but along with the pile of marginal panfish was a mix of 14 largemouth bass, seven of which exceeded four pounds, and two were

around five. My top five fish would have been around 22 pounds. All were caught on diminutive gear and 2 and 4 pound test. All were caught from the shore and everything was released. It was one of the most incredible days of fishing I had ever had, the kind of day you never forget.

My question is this... was the weather THAT critical in the ultimate outcome of this trip? Had the falling barometer had so much effect on these fish as to turn everything on in the lake? Or, was I just lucky, never to have this happen again?

Clearly, weather influences and affects fish behavior in very strong ways. There is a ton of internet reading devoted to the subject, much of which deals with barometric pressure and its immediate effect on fish life. Many scientist believe that even slight drops in barometric pressure triggers fish into feeding activities, as the swim bladders adjust to pressure changes within the underwater atmosphere. It certainly wasn’t the first time I had wild, crazy fishing just before a major front had moved in, and I hope it won’t be the last!

An interesting article by fisheries biologist Ralph Manns on the In Fisherman website, entitled Barometric Pressure and Bass, tries to explain what major, oncoming fronts do, and do not do, to fish behavior. In short,



Even with ‘under gunned’ panfish gear, I was fortunate to cash in on quality largemouths ahead of a major coastal front.

Mann’s biological crews conducted underwater observations in a series of Texas lakes to determine the fish behavior during the climatic changes. Additionally, Manns felt that the drop in barometric pressure was just one of several factors that contributed to feeding frenzies at the onset of major weather changes. His studies observed fish close to the shorelines, mid-depth and open water (schooling) bass. He concluded that a percentage of bass from all environs were, in some way affected by the change in barometer. He felt that other associated factors with frontal passages... cloud cover, wind and noticeable temperature drop, were at least as much of the puzzle piece as the barometric pressure changes.

Traditionally, dropping barometric pressure is associated with deteriorating weather conditions, much as what we experience with the coastal north east storm that dumps a bunch of rain on us and drops air temperatures dramatically. On the East Coast of the United States, these ‘coastal lows’ tend to put barometric pressures lower than in, say, mid-west storm fronts that are not associated with tropical events like we see here. Coupled with increased cloud cover, diminished

sunlight penetration and surface wave action, fish get plenty of signals that a major change in the weather is about to happen and that environmental activity will slow down and all but come to a halt during a storm event. However, just before the onslaught, it is time to party.

Scientists have yet to understand completely the total picture here. But obviously, there is often a dramatic increase in fish feeding behavior just prior to major frontal movements, nationwide. Most serious anglers have experienced it first hand, and can recall one, if not several, trips where fish were wildly feeding despite the impending bad weather that was forecasted. This phenomena even occurs with the ice fishing crowd in the upper Mid West, as one storm front after the other can trigger, then subdue, a walleye or panfish bite through 20 inches of ice. Crazy!

So... what does this mean to us average guys that just want to take advantage of a hot bite?

Well, if at all possible, get out ahead of the storm, and worry about milk, bread and toilet paper on the way home from one of the greatest fishing trips you’ll ever have... just ahead of the storm!



Many species respond positively to oncoming fronts. Paul Sell’s fine channel cat was in the pre-front mix.

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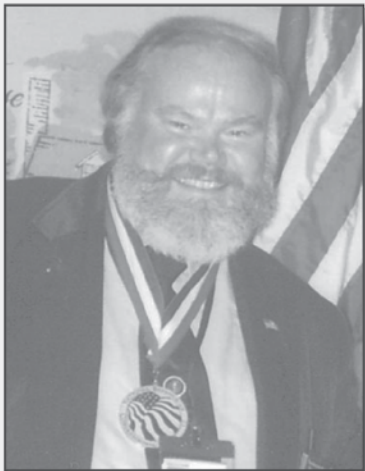


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6. Testicular/pelvic pain
7. Unexplained menstrual irregularity
8. Irritable bladder/dysfunction
9. Sexual dysfunction/loss of libido
10. Stomach problems
11. Constipation/diarrhea
12. Chest pain
13. Shortness of breath/cough
14. Heart palpitations/racing/slowing
15. Joint pain, swelling, comes & goes
16. Muscle pain/cramps
17. Headaches
18. Neck creaks/cracks/stiffness
19. Stiffness in the joints or back
20. Tingling, numbness
21. Burning/stabbing sensation
22. Bells palsy
23. Double or blurry vision/floaters
24. Light sensitivity
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?

NRP Charges Two with Fishing, Crabbing Crimes; Penalties Could Total \$200,000

Maryland Natural Resources Police officers charged two Anne Arundel County men in separate cases with illegal fishing and crabbing activities.

A Glen Burnie man faces fines of nearly \$200,000 when he appears in Annapolis District Court Nov. 21 on charges he poached numerous undersized striped bass and white perch from the Patapsco River.

Sultan Mahamud Limon, 23, was charged on Aug. 31 by NRP officers on patrol at Fort Smallwood Park, which is owned by Anne Arundel County. The officers were checking recreational anglers and their catches when they saw Limon using a cast net to harvest fish.

When they checked his catch, officers counted 116 undersized white perch and 66 undersized striped bass. The minimum size for white perch is 8 inches for anglers using a cast net. An angler may possess two striped bass between 18-28 inches, or one fish between 18-28 inches and one fish over 28 inches, daily.

The officers seized the fish and returned them to the river.

The maximum fine for undersized striped bass or harvesting over the daily limit of two fish is \$1,500 per fish. If found guilty, Limon could be fined as much as \$99,000 for harvesting undersized striped bass, \$96,000 for exceeding the daily limit of striped bass, and \$685 for harvesting undersized white perch.

On Sept. 16, officers, using NRP's radar network, arrested a Pasadena man and charged him with illegal crabbing near Bodkin Point after numerous complaints from watermen that their crab pots were being pilfered.

NRP issued John Allen Schuman, 37, citations for stealing crabs, possessing a female crab, failing to have a crabbing license and operating a vessel that lacked navigational lights.

Officers knew the crab pots were being emptied under the cover of darkness, so they focused the Maritime Law

Enforcement Information Network (MLEIN) radar units on the area to determine more precisely when the illegal activity was occurring.

At 8:30 p.m., two officers intercepted Schuman in a vessel without navigational lights. He claimed to be removing crabs from a pot that had become entangled in his boat's propeller. However, the side of his boat was covered in mud and sediment consistent with pulling crab pots.

The crabs were seized and returned to the Chesapeake Bay.

Schuman is scheduled to appear in Annapolis District Court on Nov. 21. If convicted of all charges he could be fined as much as \$3,500.

Mature Endangered Atlantic Sturgeon Discovered in Marshyhope Creek

First recorded captures in more than 40 years

Over the past several weeks Maryland Department of Natural Resources fisheries biologists have located, tagged and



DNR Fisheries Biologist Mark Bowermaster with recently caught Atlantic Sturgeon

released eight adult Atlantic sturgeon in an Eastern Shore tributary of the Chesapeake. This is the first time in more than 40 years that mature female sturgeon have been documented in Maryland upstream habitats.

"While this is not clear evidence this species is successfully spawning in Maryland, it does indicate that more research in this tributary is warranted," said Chuck Stence, DNR Anadromous Restoration project leader. "Now that sturgeon have been tagged in Marshyhope Creek, we can document information about their movements within this system and the Bay for years to come. This will give us a better understanding of the Atlantic sturgeon's status in Maryland."

The National Marine Fisheries Service listed the Atlantic sturgeon as federally endangered in April of 2012. All fishing and any other interaction with an endangered species is prohibited by federal law. DNR surveys historic spawning tributaries to determine critical sturgeon habitat in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay under a special federal permit.

Since 2012, local fishermen have reported sturgeon jumping in Marshyhope Creek, a tributary to the Nanticoke River.

This behavior is typical for Atlantic sturgeon, but scientists do not fully understand why these large-bodied bottom-dwellers tend to leap. In 2012, DNR and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service initiated an annual gill net survey in areas where sturgeon have been reported. After surveying the area for more than three years, this is the first time DNR biologists were able to catch the elusive fish.

The first catches, made on August 27, were a 7-foot, 3-inch, 154-pound mature female; and a 5-foot, 2-inch, 70-pound mature male. Both were caught in the same net and placed under anesthesia in an oxygenated tank to collect data and tissue samples for DNA analysis. DNR Biologists implanted acoustic transmitters, external tags and passive integrated transponder tags into the fish and then revived and released them back into the river. The entire process was completed within 10 minutes. Since then, six additional mature sturgeon have been tagged and released.

As part of the ongoing efforts to identify suitable habitat for sturgeon, DNR in cooperation with University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Commonwealth University, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Maryland Fishery Resource Office have deployed acoustic receivers strategically throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. These receivers detect individual transmitters that researchers have implanted into Atlantic sturgeon along the Atlantic coast from Canada to Florida. Several tagged Atlantic sturgeon have been recorded in the upper Chesapeake Bay and Pocomoke River over the past year. This project is funded through the National Marine Fisheries Service Species Recovery Grants to States program.

For more information, contact Chuck Stence at chuck.stence@maryland.gov, 410-643-6788 ext 2114.

Charlotte Girl Reels in North Carolina's State Record Green Sunfish

CRESTON, N.C. — It was a team effort that landed 13-year-old Victoria Navaroli a state record fish from a private pond in Creston.

In the early morning hours of July 12, the 13-year-old Charlotte girl watched as her big brother Jack baited his hook with ¼ of a night-crawler and then handed his fishing rod to her.

Two casts later, Victoria reeled in the record-breaking green sunfish.

The fish weighed 1 pound, 15 ounces and measured 12 inches in length, breaking the previous state record, held since 2008 by Sean Vanderburg, by 1 ounce.

While some brothers might not appreciate the irony of handing over a rod and reel to watch a sibling reel in a state record fish, Jack was very excited for her, according to Victoria.

"Jack loves fishing and would have wanted to catch it, but he was happy for me," she said, adding that Jack suspected the fish might be a state record after she landed it.

"We were planning to eat the fish and he took one look at it and told me 'I wouldn't eat that fish — it could be record breaker,'" Victoria said. "Thank goodness we didn't eat it."

She and her parents Renate and David had the fish weighed on certified scales at Berrybrook Farm the next day. Lawrence Dorsey, a fisheries biologist with the Wildlife Commission, examined and certified the fish.

To qualify for a N.C. freshwater fish state record, anglers must have caught the fish by rod and reel or cane pole, have the fish weighed on a scale certified by the N.C. Department of Agriculture, witnessed by one observer, have the fish certified by a fisheries biologist from the Commission, and submit an application with a full, side-view photo of the fish.

For anglers who catch a green sunfish that doesn't quite measure up to this latest record-breaker but is 9 inches or longer or weighs 1 pound or more, the Commission has a green sunfish classification for its North Carolina Angler Recognition Program.

NCARP officially recognizes anglers who catch trophy-sized freshwater fish that do not qualify for a state record with a certificate featuring color reproductions of fish art by renowned wildlife artist and former Commission fisheries biologist Duane Raver.



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MSSA Rockfish Options.....

Coastal Recreational Options

At this time the MSSA believes Option B1, a bag limit of one fish at the current 28-inch minimum within a one year time frame is in the best interest of our anglers here in Maryland and for the sustainability of our striped bass fishery. This option would translate into a 36 inch minimum for our Spring Trophy season according to DNR. We would like to note that the MSSA has implemented a 36 inch minimum within its spring tournament for the past three years.

Why MSSA is Recommending

Option B1:

Reducing the individual bag limit by one fish on the coast offers a 31% reduction in harvest, bringing the fishing mortality in line or above the target. With the 2010 and 2011 recruitment years being the most robust of recent, it's important to protect those females until at least 90% can spawn (age 5-8) at least once before harvest.

ASFMC has previously stated that reducing fishing mortality on fish aged 8-12 (32- to 40-inch fish) by half would result in "much greater egg production in the stock and an age distribution in which older fish are much more dominant"; as such, any slot option (proposed in options B4, B6, B7, B8, or B9) which focuses undue harvest pressure on more 'fertile' age/size fish in the stock could be counterproductive to conservation efforts.

Summer/Fall Chesapeake Bay Options:

At this time the MSSA believes Option B11, a two fish bag limit with a 21 inch minimum, is in the best interest of Maryland recreational anglers and represents a majority of angler sentiment. We received a tremendous amount of feedback on this fishery with a large majority agreeing that a two fish bag limit was important to maintain.

Additional Recommendations

In addition to Option B1 and B11, we believe the Maryland DNR should continue its efforts to press the ASMFC Technical Committee to agree on Chesapeake Bay reference points and initiate another draft addendum as soon as possible.

Continue the efforts to put in place a maximum size limit on the commercial striped bass fishery in Virginia, similar to Maryland which is a 36 inch maximum.

Continue to focus enforcement on the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) up and down the Atlantic Coast

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By Grant Soukup

It was opening day of the Maryland deer season. I have never missed this special day. All of my buddies were at their hunting camps, getting ready for the hunt. Not me, I was planning to miss the event this year.

Jessie, our daughter, had been born a few days earlier, and she and Mrs. Montana Grant had just come home from the hospital. As a proud new father and husband, I was willing to sacrifice the annual tradition of a deer hunt. All of my friends understood and respected my decision to stay home.

The only person that wanted me to hunt was my wife! "I will be fine, go ahead and go. Just be home early so you can check on us." Providing food for the family is part of being a good father.

Keep in mind that this was before cell phones or decent radios. When Jessie was born, I was at the hospital for the long haul. After her birth, I went home to get some sleep. It was around 4:00 pm and I couldn't relax. Maybe I will try a quick bow hunt! I grabbed my gear and climbed into a tree stand that I called "the Lounge". It was nailed to the tree and had two long rails for support. When sitting in this comfortable tree stand, you could swing your legs over the rails and really get comfy.

Suddenly, I felt raindrops on my face. It was nearly midnight and was still in the tree stand lounging in a rainstorm! Trophy Bucks could have had a convention under my stand and I would have never noticed. Montana Grant, the proud new father, was asleep at the wheel!

"Montana Grant"

Jessie's Buck!



Deer limits were much smaller back in the day. Now a deer hunter can legally harvest dozens of deer each season. One deer was pretty much it years ago. If you missed your chance, you didn't put meat in the freezer.

"Yes Dear, I will be back around 10:00 AM to check on you and Little Jessie!" With the coming sunrise, I was in my tree stand enjoying the deer opener. I could hear the deer moving in my direction. It seemed like the woods came to life with the movement of dozens of does. I used the scope on my shotgun to check for antlers. After examining most of the herd, I saw antler! It didn't matter how big as long as it was legal. The buck finally stood alone and at 100 yards, I pulled the trigger. Deer were running everywhere and I could no longer see the buck. I carefully marked the spot where I had shot and figured there would be a buck or a blood trail.

Once I finished shaking, I climbed from the tree and made my way to the spot where the buck had stood. The blood trail began where I had shot. I followed the trail until I noticed a brown shape lying on the ground. There was my Buck!

This mature buck was a heavy beamed six pointer that would weigh in at 180lbs. He was the only buck in the harem of nearly 30 does. He had gone less than 100 yards before burying the left side of his rack into the forest floor.

After saying thanks to the Great Deer Hunter Gods, I dressed the buck and began to make my way

home.

As my wife awoke, I had a hot cup of coffee and breakfast ready. Jessie's warm milk bottle was ready and the buck was hanging in the shed! I nicknamed this great deer "Jessie's Buck" in honor of her birth and the great last minute hunt. She also has the rack mounted in her new home in Montana. The story is written on the back of the plaque.

Bringing home a new daughter and great buck within 24 hours is a wonderful accomplishment. My hunting buddies were all skunked on opening day. Well, I guess there is only so much luck to go around!

Hunt hard and shoot center!

COOKIN' With Montana Grant!

Wild game is a wonderful way to supplement our carnivore diets. There are really no new recipe ideas. Great cooks just discover old recipes or improvise to prepare fast feasts for hungry hunters.

Deer, elk, fish, and nature's bounty are healthy and delicious. Each year, all of us are searching for a new way to enjoy our hard earned meat. I always enjoy feeding "picky eaters" a delicious dish that makes them believers of eating wild game. Here are a few new ROLL-UP recipe additions from the kitchen of Montana Grant that I am sure will become your favorites too!

Montana Grant's BIG GAME BUNDLES!

This big game "rolled meat" meal is easy and perfect for hunting camp. You can use any beef or big game steak to create this amazing meal. It is particularly delicious when using venison.

- 1 1/2 - 2 lbs. of round steak
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 lb. of smoked bacon
- Garlic salt

Oregano
2 cans of mushrooms, 4 oz. cans. Fresh mushrooms are also great to use.

Quick mixing flour
Cut the steaks into pieces about 3-4 inches wide Use a tenderizing hammer to shape the piece into a 6x4 inch piece. Layer a piece of sliced bacon and diced onion on each steak. Sprinkle lightly with garlic salt and oregano. Roll each steak into a "bundle" and secure with a string. I normally use twine or cotton cord to wrap the bundles. Brown each bundle in a Dutch Oven or frying pan using a small amount of oil. Add 3/4 cup of water to the mix and scrape the Dutch Oven or frying pan. Spoon the liquid over the bundles and simmer covered for about 3 hours. Add more water if needed. When cooked, remove the bundles to a serving dish. Add the mushrooms and flour to the liquid remaining in the pan and mix. Simmer a bit and then pour over top the meat.

Serve with noodles or rice. The bacon keeps the meat delicious and tender. The first time I had this meal was on a mountaintop in Montana. The camp cook used an axe to tenderize the meat! The Dutch Oven was placed on a campfire. He also made fresh biscuits and a peach cobbler over the fire in two other Dutch Ovens. Once the meal was prepared and in the ovens, he spent his time relaxing until the meal was ready. Needless to say, there were no leftovers!



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Coastal Report

By Capt. Mark Sampson

Last week we had four days of strong northeast wind. To people who don't fish the reaction to that statement might be, "So what?" But for the rest of us we know darn well what that means - and it "ain't" good! For the other group of "unfortunate folks" who don't know why a strong NE wind is bad, please let me explain: It's the wind that makes the waves, strong wind make for big waves, and big waves makes it tough to get out on the water and fish. It's that simple.

Most folks have very limited time to get out and fish; maybe they're restricted to just going on weekends, or on a specific week during their summer vacation at the beach, or perhaps it can only happen when the kids don't need attending, the lawn doesn't need mowed, and everything at home is in perfect working order. So when the timing is right to go fishing but a weather system rolls in that goofs things up for numerous days in a row, it can be huge letdown for someone who has been so looking forward to it for a long time. But on days like we had last week when the

wind is blows 20 or more knots and the open waters become a total mess with the ocean brandishing huge breaking seas and the bay waters turning white with a driving wind chop, fishing plans can quickly be blown apart like the waves crashing on inlet's stone jetties.

The good news is that, except for tropical storm conditions when people just have to stay off the water "period," if it's just a "hard blow" there are always places where anglers go if they just can't say "no" to fishing that day, and it's all about finding the "leeward" side of something.

The leeward side of something is the down-wind side, or the side that is sheltered from the wind. On the water the leeward side of a land mass or large object such as a bridge, jetty, pier, or even a very large anchored vessel can provide enough protection from the wind that the water might not just be "fishable" but actually quite calm. No matter which way the wind is blowing, anglers wishing to fish the inshore waters around Ocean City always have leeward places where they can tuck in an hide from strong winds. Granted, these places may or may not be loaded with fish at that particular time, but for those who really-really want to fish, at least they can give them an option other than sitting at home and grumbling about the weather!

Those who aren't familiar with a particular area might find that the easiest way to locate sheltered places to fish is to grab a chart of the local waters and lay a pencil on it in the direction the wind is blowing. This will help one to visualize where the calm areas are and then identify places that might also hold fish. Just as important is

deciding whether or not the calm areas are accessible or not, because if anglers must cross a large expanse of rough open water in a small boat just to get there, the place might not be a viable option.

Just like last week, some of the strongest winds we get a around here often come from the northeast, which will make the ocean-side of the beach virtually unfishable but still leave plenty of places in the bay to hide. On a NE blow the inside of the inlet will remain calm as will the east channel from 13th street all the way down to the inlet. The Rt.50 Bridge and the shoal to the north of it also offer some shelter form a NE wind so the south side of the bridge can be a decent place to fish as well as the waters in front of and just below the mouth to the commercial harbor in West Ocean City. The channel running south behind Assateague Island also offers many places of sanctuary when the wind is from the NE. These are all places where anglers routinely catch flounder croaker, tautog, rockfish, and bluefish. A scouting drive across the Rt.50 Bridge will reveal where the calmest downtown waters are and give anglers some idea how to gear up for success and what to expect when they get there.

A decent size boat can certainly make it more comfortable for those trying to fish in choppy waters, but those with small, shallow-draft boats will sometimes have an advantage on windy days. Not limited to traveling only in the deep, open, channels, small boats can often run close to the lee side of a shoreline and avoid rough water altogether. Small boats

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are also easy to trailer and launch at ramps that are closest to the fish, thereby eliminating the need to make a long run up or down a choppy bay. Even on windy days those who launch at the public ram in the West OC harbor or down at the Assateague Bridge can sometimes idle from their trailer to good fishing in just a few minutes and never encounter so much as a single whitecap!

Often in the fall we'll get strong west or northwest winds which will result in the calmest part of the bay being its west side. Such winds will also allow anglers to get out in the ocean as long as they don't go too far. I remember comfortably fishing the ocean one day when the wind was blowing from the west about 30-knots. We anchored up about a quarter-mile offshore and caught seatrout, croaker, bluefish, and sharks all day. Any farther offshore would have been way too rough fish, but tucked in close we were offered plenty protection from not only the landmass but also the buildings along the beach. That day we had to tie our hats on our heads but we enjoyed great fishing and calm seas.

The end of the summer often brings with it a lot of breezy days, knowing where to go as the wind works its way around the compass can be the difference between spending time on the boat - or on the sofa.

SPANNING THE GLOBE....

Florida Teen Catches 693-pound Swordfish, Potential State Record

North Palm Beach, Florida is still buzzing after a 17-year-old landed a massive 693-pound swordfish early last month.

According to WPTV, Adam Sattar fought the swordfish for more than four hours off the coast of Jupiter before he finally brought the fish in with the help of his father. At 14 feet in length, the Sattar family had to tow the beast 20 miles back to shore before it could be weighed.

"He came up twice. All we saw was a big shadow. Thought it might have been a shark. The third time he came up we ended up seeing the fish, stuck him with the gaffe and tied him," the teen angler said.

It was no shark, but it may be a new state record. According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the current swordfish record is held by a 612-pound, 12-ounce specimen caught by Stephen Stanford



in Key Largo back in 1978. On paper, Sattar's catch would be a shoe-in for the record, but a technicality may bar the angler from the record books.

Sattar used an electric reel to capture his nearly 700-pound swordfish, the same kind of equipment which prevented a 683-pound swordfish from claiming the record in 2012. Regardless, the fish has made an impression on the local angling community.

"Biggest fish I ever measured in here was probably about 220 pounds," Edmund Alves, a manager at Sailfish Marina, told KWGN.

The Sattars kept the bill from the swordfish after it was weighed, but

American shad totaled 10,799; white perch, 2,896 and one brown trout.

Other fish turning up in the 100-foot long by 6-foot deep and a quarter-inch thick seine included bluefish, large-mouth bass, croaker, channel cats, yellow perch, bluegills and sunnies. You can find the complete species list at www.njfishandwildlife.com.

NOAA, UNC-Wilmington study finds warming Atlantic ocean temperatures could increase expansion of invasive, native species

Warming water temperatures due to climate change could expand the range of many native species of tropical fish, including the invasive and poisonous lionfish, according to a study of 40 species along rocky and artificial reefs off North Carolina by researchers from NOAA and the University of North Carolina-Wilmington.

The findings, reported for the first time, were published in the September issue of Marine Ecology Progress Series.

"The results will allow us to better understand how the fish communities might shift under different climate change scenarios and provide the type of environmental data to inform future decisions relating to the management and siting of protected areas," said Paula Whitfield, a research ecologist at NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) and lead author of the study.

shared the meat with a crowd that had gathered. Family friend Tore Waagen said that sharing the meat after a large catch is almost like a tradition, and a fantasy for all saltwater anglers.

"I think we're all dreamers, and we all hope any-time we go out to fish it's a record or a really big fish so you can share all the meat with your

friends," said Waagen, who was supposed to go fishing with the Sattars on the day of the catch but later canceled.

Adam Sattar and his dad said they will be submitting paperwork for the state record to see whether they are eligible.

While theirs may be a big fish, it is still a far cry from the reigning world record, which has stood unbroken for 61 years. According to the International Game Fish Association, that

honor goes to a 1,182-pound swordfish harvested in Chile by Louis Marron in 1953.

Cast and Blast out of Tilghman Island Md. with 'Jim Dandy Charters' 410-708-9851



Good news in Delaware River hauls

Total catch from 311 seining operations was 74,277 fish with the five top catches Atlantic menhaden, American shad, bay anchovy, banded killifish and white perch.

These are the good old days compared to 1980.

Back then the first Delaware River Seine survey by the Bureau of Marine Fisheries only turned up seven young of the year striped bass in the hauls. Those were times of severe species depletion for the popular gamefish.

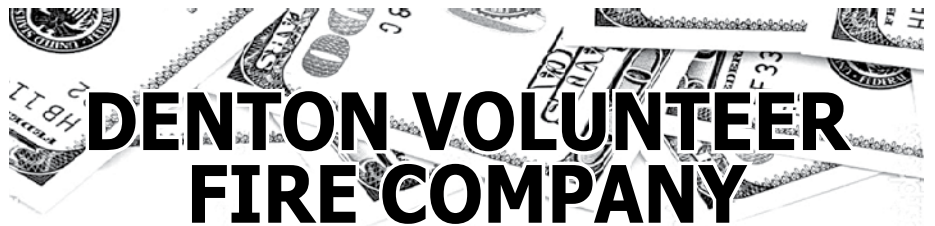
The 2013 survey, from June 18 to November 22, caught 846 striped bass and 802 were less than a year old, a very positive sign of spawning success.

Stripers were the tenth most caught species in the survey, taken in tidal waters from Salem to Burlington counties.

Total catch from 311 seining operations was 74,277 fish with the five top catches Atlantic menhaden, American shad, bay anchovy, banded killifish and white perch.

In one monster haul in June, 2013, 30,727 menhaden (bunker) were netted. They do travel in large schools. That was 91 percent of all of this most important forage fish caught in the six-months of seining and 46 percent of all fish caught.

The oily menhaden is also a mega-important commercial fishery, Omega-3 and all that.



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1:45 \$200	3:30 \$1,000	5:15 \$200
1:50 \$200	3:35 \$200	5:20 \$200
1:55 \$200	3:40 \$200	5:25 \$200
2:00 \$1,000	3:45 \$200	5:30 \$1,000
2:05 \$200	3:50 \$200	5:35 \$200
2:10 \$200	3:55 \$200	5:40 \$200
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CHEESY ZUCCHINI PIE WITH VENISON

Ingredients

1 lb. ground venison
 1/2 cup chopped onions
 1 medium zucchini sliced, eggplant works well too!
 1/4 cup green bell peppers chopped
 1/4 cup red bell peppers chopped
 1 can diced tomatoes or 1 large fresh tomato
 1 1/2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
 2 pie crusts- 1 tsp. garlic
 1 tsp. dill - 1 tsp. oregano
 1 tsp. basil - 1 tbs. olive oil

Instructions

Brown ground venison over medium-low heat and set aside. Be sure not to overcook and remove promptly from heat. Saute onions and peppers for three min. over medium-high heat. Add zucchini slices. Saute another 3-4 min. In the meantime, grease a 9 in. pie plate and add the pie crust. Add canned tomatoes (drain at least half of the juice) and fresh or dried dill, basil, oregano and garlic to zucchini mixture. Add browned ground venison. Once heated through, remove and pour into pie plate. Add shredded cheese. Add the top crust. Make four two inch slits in the top of the pie crust. Bake for about 30 min. on 375 degrees.



The Outdoor Enthusiast's Resource for Preparing and Serving Fish & Game with Style
<http://recipes.sportsmanstable.com>

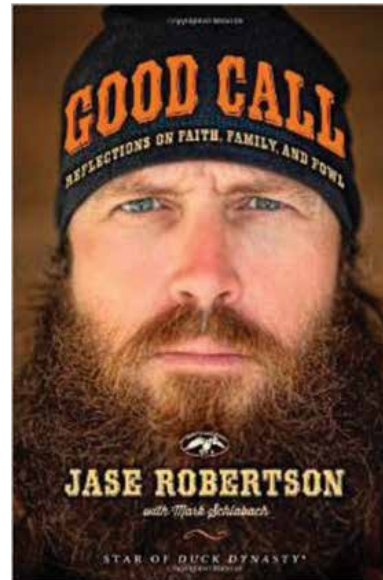


Eric Price, Zachary Quillen and Mitchell Quillen had a good out of Tilghman Island with Captain Dave Shultie aboard the 'KDJ'.

Book of the Month

GOOD CALL: REFLECTIONS ON FAITH, FAMILY, AND FOWL

The closer we look at the Robertson family, the more we discover the substance and authenticity below the surface of these well-known TV characters. In this enlightening book, Jase Robertson gives us a deep look behind his funnyman exterior. In addition to stories of life in the Robertson family and epic tales of hunting of all kinds, readers will get an inside look at Jase's personal faith in the Creator of the outdoors he so dearly loves:



"My first thoughts about God came in a duck blind as I gazed upon the diversity and beauty of creation. There is nothing in nature that can be reproduced or equaled by humans. None of our computers, micro-chips, or cell phones can duplicate what God has put forth. Viewing the details of this magnificent earth is better than any sermon from any preacher I have heard about the evidence of God."

About the Author

Jase Robertson is the second oldest Robertson son and one of the favorite stars of A&E's Duck Dynasty. Jase has been involved in the family business making duck calls since he was a boy. He graduated from Bible college after high school and worked part-time in ministry for two years before becoming Duck Commander's first paid employee in the mid '90s. Now, family, hunting, and helping the family business succeed consume most of Jase's time. Jase runs the manufacturing part of Duck Commander, making sure that every call is hand-tuned to be the best possible call. He and his wife, Missy, live in West Monroe, Louisiana, with their children and the rest of the Robertson clan.

Mark Schlabach is the coauthor of the New York Times bestselling books, Happy, Happy, Happy, Si-cology 1, and The Duck Commander Family. He is one of the most respected and popular college football columnists in the country. He and his wife live in Madison, Georgia, with their three children.




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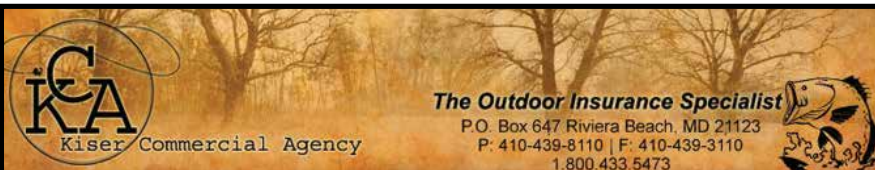


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“The last word”

In Support of Ponds

By Steve Huettner

I drove up and saw the for sale, and even though my friend had told me a few weeks prior he was putting it up for sale (downsizing in his life) it was still a bit of shock. As I took my rod and from the truck and started walking, I began to think about the pond. It's located in a spot that I can't divulge, is relatively close to my home, and has always left me feeling better after I left.

Ponds always seem to get the short end of the stick. Your favorite outdoor author never waxes poetically about ponds, and most references to ponds in stories refer to something bad happening near them. It seems people like to dispose of things in ponds or things are always being pulled out of them.

As I tied on a lure and began to cast, I thought just how great ponds are. Ponds are not fancy or pretentious, they are like a comfortable pair of shoes and those faded jeans that your wife has been after you to get rid of. There's nothing stressful about fishing a pond. The pond doesn't care what type of gear you have. Leave the latest space age rod and reel at home, a push button snoop rod or that old spin casting combo you've had for 20 years will get the job done. No matter the weather, if one desires the pond can be fished and it will produce some type of catch regardless the conditions. Ponds are seldom crowded and don't take a lot of effort to fish. My personal rule is one should fish a pond about the time it takes to finish a good cigar.

I wonder how many kids are introduced to fishing at ponds. I remember how my daughter went on her first fishing trip at this pond. The

pink Barbie fishing rod rigged with a worm and a bobber, not to mention a cooler filled with snacks and juice boxes. The pond provided an hour or two of sensory entertainment. The pond offered sunfish and blue gills willing to kamikaze themselves onto a hook that make any kid squeal. Wildlife to keep her entertained and full of questions; turtles, frogs, snakes, grasshoppers, geese, ducks, swallows and herons. I will never

forget one day as she will reeling in a sunfish, as it neared the bank an enormous bass swam up and ate the fish right in front of us. Her eyes were the size of silver dollars. She looked at me and said, "Dad did you see what just happened, that big fish came in and ate my little fish". That was my daughter's introduction to how Mother Nature worked.

As my daughter grew she learned how to tie on a lure, bait a hook (sometimes) and how to cast. On some of the trips I brought nieces and nephews along with me who always left with smiles and picture of the fish they caught with uncle hutty at the pond.

Rest assured that the pond is not for the kids only, because this pond has something that adults enjoy also, big largemouth bass. While I am not a bass fanatic like some of my friends, I will say hooking into a large lunker in the pond always got my got my heart pumping. One summer weekend my sister and brother in law were visiting, and being from Florida my brother in law is a fanatic for big largemouth bass. As we drove

over I promised that he would have an opportunity to catch fish, (despite the fact is was sunny and 90 degrees). As we pulled up and he viewed the pond for the first time I could see the look on his face as he wondered if I was crazy for dragging him out this pond with the promise of big bass. After two hours of fishing, my brother in law was left flabbergasted as here caught and released 4 largemouths that would make any fisherman smile, not to mention the monster that broke the line after a 10 minute battle. All this at a pond that many would dismiss at first glance.

I truly hope that the future owners of this pond realize what they have when then take ownership. The pond is more than a hole that holds water. The pond is a home to all manners of critters from fish to fowl. It is a place where kids can be kids and are introduced to the pleasure of fishing. It's a place that provides countless laughs and memories. I hope they understand that and appreciate it.



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Sport, commercial fishermen differ over striped bass options

By Karl Blankenship

For years, striped bass were a textbook example of successful fishery management.

After a dramatic population crash in the early 1980s, a painful harvest moratorium was put in place. As hoped, the population rebounded. By 1995, it was declared “recovered” — and even then the population continued to climb.

By the early 2000s, commercial fishermen and recreational anglers were seeing more large striped bass than at any time in recent memory.

Fast forward another decade, to 2014, and the picture is starkly different. The spawning population is at about the same level it was in 1995, when it was declared recovered, but instead of trending upward, it’s been declining for a decade.

It is expected to drop below the “recovered” threshold level next year.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, which regulates the management of migratory fish species and includes representatives from all East Coast states, is weighing options that range from a 25 percent harvest reduction next year to phasing in a smaller, 7 percent annual reduction over three years — or even doing nothing at all.

“This is the premier fisheries management success story,” said John M. R. Bull, commissioner of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. “I don’t think anybody wants to jeopardize that success.”

But, views about what the ASMFC should do to maintain that success when it meets in late October — and even the seriousness of the current situation — vary widely.

Some groups representing recreational anglers are leading the charge for aggressive, and quick, action.

Tony Friedrich, executive director of the Coastal Conservation Association in Maryland, said he supports a 25 percent reduction, but only because the ASMFC’s options don’t include a greater cut.

The fish “are in a lot of trouble,” he said, citing angler surveys showing that interactions with fish — basically how often they catch a striped bass — have fallen 75 percent since 2006.

“If you talk to a lot of people on the East Coast, they are up in arms,” Friedrich said. “They want to go a step beyond 25 percent.”

In comments to the ASMFC, the group Stripers Forever contends “the signs of diminishing abundance have been ignored for years.” It calls for a 25 percent harvest reduction effective next year, but said even that is “too little too late.”

On the other hand, Billy Rice, a commercial fisherman who has worked 46 years on the Potomac River and Maryland tributaries, said striped bass will soon become more abundant in the Bay as a result of a strong reproduction in 2011. Fish born

that year will soon reach legal size in the Chesapeake, and shortly thereafter along the coast.

“We need to keep a close eye on it, but I wouldn’t even come close to calling it a crisis,” said Rice, who is a member of both the Potomac River Fishery Commission and an advisory panel to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Absorbing a 25 percent reduction in a single year, he said, “would virtually cripple our commercial fishing industry.”

Rice contends that, given time, striped bass will bounce back, and that it’s not realistic to think that any stock can be consistently maintained at record-high levels. “Fish naturally go through cycles, no matter how well you manage them,” he said. “We are not going to stop the natural cycle that has been going on since the beginning of time.”

The different perspectives reflect, in part, longstanding tension between recreational and commercial interests, which compete for the same fish.

Commercial fishermen, equipped with large boats, nets and often decades of individual and community knowledge, are efficient. They typically can catch their given quota despite competition from recreational anglers, as long as the stock is at a healthy level.

Recreational fishermen do best when fish are very abundant. The fish are more easily found, and the commercial quota typically takes a smaller portion of the available population. As the population declines, recreational anglers with fishing lines are less efficient than watermen with nets, and have a harder time finding fish — even if the stock is still considered to be at a sustainable level.

“When abundance is down, the recreational anglers are the ones whose catch is going to go down the most,” said Bill Goldsborough, director of fisheries for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. “By the same token, when abundance is up, their catch goes up the most. The recreational catch is tied very closely to abundance.”

That’s reflected in ASMFC figures which show spikes in recreational harvests when the striped bass population hit its peak in the early 2000s. In fact, the estimated dead discards from the recreational fishery along the coast — those fish that are caught and released, but die anyway (about 9 percent of the released fish) — exceeded the entire commercial catch as recently as 2006.

As abundance has declined, though, the commercial catch — which is based on a quota and therefore fluctuates less from year to year — has overtaken the recreational catch in the Bay and in some other states that have a commercial striped bass fishery.

So, for recreational fisheries, the situation can look bleak — but the stock itself is not in peril, Goldsborough said.

“From a biology standpoint, I think we are OK,” he said. “We do need to tighten the belt and ensure that we turn that trajectory back up for the spawning stock biomass. I don’t think it is a crisis, but there definitely is a need to act.”

The more difficult question, said Goldsborough, who is also a member

of the ASMFC, is weighing management impacts on commercial and recreational sectors.

“It is really the age-old issue for fisheries management, and that is resolving the difference between managing for commercial fishing objectives and managing for recreational fishing objectives in a shared stock,” he said.

The reason for the decline in striped bass abundance over the last decade, scientists say, has been a series of years with poor reproduction.

In the 13-year span from 1993 through 2005, reproduction was at or above the long-term average 10 times, including the three best years on record in 1993, 1996 and 2001, as measured by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Young-of-Year index. The Chesapeake Bay is where the vast majority of striped bass found along the East Coast are spawned.

But reproduction has been below average in six of eight years since then, including some of the poorest years since the 1980s.

Successful reproduction typically requires two things: lots of eggs produced by females and weather conditions that promote the survival of their young.

Because they can’t control the weather, fishery managers try to keep the abundance of adult female fish high with the hope that when the spawning fish mesh with the right conditions, they will produce a large “year class” of young fish. With striped bass, above-average year classes have been particularly important for overall abundance.

The spawning stock biomass peaked at around 170 million pounds a decade ago, and dropped to an estimated 128 million pounds last year, just 1 million pounds above the minimum threshold of 127 million pounds set by ASMFC. It is on a trajectory to fall below that threshold next year.

But the significance of crossing that threshold is less clear. In fishery management, such thresholds are typically a biologically established minimum. Falling below that number risks a stock crash.

In the case of striped bass, the spawning stock biomass is not set at a danger level. Rather, it is set at its 1995 level, when the stock was declared recovered by ASMFC. It is about 12 times higher than the population’s low point in the early 1980s.

“We don’t feel the population is at a biological risk,” said Tom O’Connell, fisheries director with the Maryland DNR. “Yes, it is lower than stakeholders want, and lower than managers want. But it is not at a biological risk.”

The higher threshold, fishery managers say, reflects the fact that striped bass are considered a marquee species both in the Bay and along the coast.

As a result, O’Connell and some other fishery managers say, the question is not whether something should be done, but rather how much — and how quickly.

While reproduction in most recent years has been low, the 2011 year class was the fourth strongest since Maryland’s Young-of-Year index began in 1956. Those fish will soon reach catchable size — 18 inches — in the Bay, and will shortly thereafter

migrate to coastal waters where they typically need to be larger before they can be caught.

“If we did nothing, but we kept fishing mortality at the current level, we would probably see that population come back up, but it may take three, four, five, six years,” O’Connell said.

“We should react, because the management plan and the stakeholders prefer that this species be at a higher abundance level,” he said. But, he added, “we don’t have to react in one year.”

Some recreational anglers, like Friedrich, worry that delaying or spreading out cuts only delays the potential comeback. Friedrich also contended that managers are putting too much stock on the 2011 year class which, he said “are about to go into the meat grinder” as they hit legal catch sizes in the Bay and along the coast.

“That 2011 class is where all the fishing pressure is going to fall,” he said. “It may be the most pressured year class in history.”

But sharp, single-year cutbacks would hit the commercial fishery hard, particularly in the Bay: Maryland and Virginia have the highest commercial quotas of East Coast states.

“In one year, that would be devastating,” said Bull, the VMRC commissioner. “I believe that it is very important, for the commercial fishery here in Virginia, to phase in the impact.”

Fishery managers from the Bay states also contend that new regulations could unfairly hit the Chesapeake.

After spawning, the Bay serves as a nursery for striped bass before they migrate to the coast. Fishery managers say females — which make up the spawning stock — leave the Bay earlier than males, so most of the Bay catch consists of male fish. Sharply reducing the catch on those males does little to boost spawning stock biomass, they say.

For years, harvest levels for striped bass in the Chesapeake were set separately from those along the coast. That was reflected in 2013, fishery managers said, when catch limits in the Bay were 14 percent below those in 2012, reflecting a decline in larger fish in the Bay.

But after a recent stock assessment, the ASMFC failed to set a Bay specific target, citing a lack of adequate information, even as it acknowledged differences between the Bay and coastal stocks.

If the Chesapeake is subjected to the same across-the-board reduction as the rest of the coast, managers say, it will not only hurt the fishing industry, but provide little benefit to the spawning stock.

“It is really misleading to the public to think that this level of reduction in the Chesapeake Bay is going to rebuild the female spawning stock biomass, because our fishery is predominantly males outside the spring trophy season,” O’Connell said.

About Karl Blankenship
Karl Blankenship is editor of the Bay Journal and Executive Director of Chesapeake Media Service. He has served as editor of the Bay Journal since its inception in 1991.

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FWS announces final dates for migratory bird hunting

The Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) has promulgated final rules for 2014-15 waterfowl hunting seasons in states that deferred selection. FWS announced the rules in the Federal Register of Friday, Sept. 26, 2014, a day after it finalized the rules for the next migratory bird hunting seasons. The rules take effect on Saturday, Sept. 27, 2014.

If you have any questions, contact Ron W. Kokel, Division of Migratory Bird Management at FWS, (703) 358-1714. FWS says the latest declaration amounts to its last announcement in the long process of proposing rules for the upcoming season. FWS first proposed rules on April 30 and gave opportunities for public comment.

The latest announcement lists the seasons in addition to ones earlier proposed. The daily bag limit for sora and Virginia rails total 25 and

75 respectively in the aggregate. For clapper and king rails, the limits amount to 15 and 45, with exceptions in Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey; where limits total 10 daily and 30 overall.

The rules include a chart listing dates and limits for everything from light geese to brant, mersangers, Canada geese, light geese, coots, etc. in various states and zones within states. In Wyoming, for example, you can shoot three Canada geese, white fronted geese and brant total per day and a total of nine between Sept. 27 and Jan. 1.

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Fatal Bear Attack in New Jersey Spurs Debate Between Hunters, Animal Rights Activists

The tragic death of a 22-year-old hiker near West Milford, New Jersey last month represents the state's first fatal bear attack in 150 years. The incident incited a heated debate between animal rights advocates and hunters on how the state is currently managing the bear population, and the conversation is not limited to New Jersey alone. Rising bear populations across the East Coast

have many wildlife officials concerned, and in states like Maine where regulations surrounding bear hunting are on the November ballot, the fatal mauling has given the issue a sense of urgency.



According to Reuters, the body of Darsh Patel was found by his friends after they became separated from him in the 576-acre Apshawa Preserve. Police arrived to discover that the bear was still guarding Patel's body, and euthanized the animal at the scene.

"This is truly a tragic event," Judy Camuso, wildlife division director of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (DIFW), told Bangor Daily News. "As biologists, we work hard to reduce conflicts. We realize that this is always a possibility, but this is every wildlife manager's worst nightmare."

The DIFW recently outlined the reasons why it categorically opposed Question 1, an initiative on Maine's November ballot that seeks to outlaw the use of baiting, hounds, and traps in harvesting bears—traditional and effective hunting practices for many sportsmen. Animal rights activists in Maine backed the proposal because they claim those methods are "cruel, unethical, and unnecessary." In light of New Jersey's recent bear mauling, some opponents of bear hunting continue to stress that education, rather than population management, should be at the forefront of the state's bear program.

"There is no guarantee that any program can avert such a tragedy," Susan Russell, wildlife policy director for the Animal Protection League of New Jersey, told NJ.com. "However, New Jersey must join other bear regions and get serious about restricting black bear access to human foods, primarily trash, bear/deer bait and foods brought to campgrounds, and maintain a comprehensive and rigorous education campaign."

Animal rights groups say that hunting has little effect on controlling the bear population. On the other hand, hunters say that a greater amount of bear-related conflicts are all the more reason to expand hunting opportunities. Some biologists, such as Maine wildlife expert Deborah Perkins, assert that hunting is a vital tool to manage rising bear numbers.

"Mainers have no idea how fortunate we are to enjoy a large population of bears, while having very minimal bear-human conflicts," she said. "It's no ac-

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cident. Our state biologists have been carefully, scientifically managing this population for decades.”

In New Jersey, hunters are calling for the DEP to push the hunting season earlier. Opening the season before the black bears approach hibernation means that hunters are likely to be much more successful.

“We’re looking to make towns, municipalities, and state government aware of the fact that this isn’t just a bloodsport,” said Anthony Mauro, chairman of the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance. “There’s a purpose behind it, and that’s population management.”

Experts believe that New Jersey is home to roughly 2,500 black bears, one of the highest population densities in the nation. Last year the DEP received reports of 572 bear sightings and 1,380 counts of bear-related damage or nuisance. This included 30 cases of home entry, 51 livestock kills, and four cases of aggressive behavior. There were no reported human attacks.



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Vessel bill awaits action

Commercial fishermen like Bradley Styron, owner and operator of Quality Seafood of Cedar Island, wash their decks and pump out their bilge water on a regular basis during their everyday operations. But if a bill currently before the Senate doesn't get passed, they might have to meet tougher environmental regulations to do so.

Sen. Mark Begich, D-Ark., introduced the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (S.2094) in the Senate March 6. Since July 23, it's been before the Senate's Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation; if the bill doesn't get passed by the end of the current congressional session, then in December current exemptions for commercial fishing vessels from vessel discharge requirements will expire.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency's

website, water.epa.gov, the agency regulates discharges from the normal operations of vessels, such as ballast water, bilge, graywater (water from sinks, showers, etc.) and anti-foulant paints and their leachate. The agency requires a vessel general permit for these discharges for commercial vessels over 79 feet long and operated as a means of transportation.

Commercial fishing vessels and other commercial vessels are currently under a moratorium for being required to get a permit. However, the EPA website says this moratorium expires on Thursday, Dec. 18.

This means if no new legislation extends or replaces this moratorium, commercial vessels under 79 feet, including fishing vessels, will need a VGP for small vessels. The EPA estimates this will affect about 115,000-138,000 vessels. Commercial vessels 79 feet and over will need to get a regular VGP.

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