

# Fishing & Hunting Journal



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## “Campbell’s Catch”

### Conowingo Fish Whisperer

Dave McCollum is an avid angler, conservationist, father and friend. He has been fishing below Conowingo Dam for 50 years and knows the area well. Dave catches fish when others can't seem to get a bite, big fish too. Some might call him a fish whisperer. I recently spent a day with Dave fishing the lower Susquehanna River. Between casts, we talked about his lifetime of fishing experiences there. He shared some of his fishing tips with me for this article, so that readers might catch more and bigger fish.

Pleasant and talkative, Dave is quick to credit those who taught him about fishing. As a boy, Dave had some significant adult influences in his life. For instance, an old man named Sparky who lived in Dave's neighborhood took him fishing near the mill at Rock Run when Dave was ten. That is where Dave caught his first striped bass, a feisty 18-incher. Dave caught it on a red jig head with a white twister tail, the memory still etched in his brain. From that day forward, Dave was hopelessly hooked on fishing.

Dave continued his fervor for fishing and graduated from Towson State University in 1983 with a Bachelor's degree in biology. In 1980, he took a year off from his studies to work a full-time, paid internship for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Dave's job was as an assistant to the field trip director of estuarine ecology. His mentor at CBF was none other than Senior Naturalist John Page Williams. During that year, Dave glued himself to JPW's hip, asking questions and soaking in as much information as he could. John Page taught Dave much of

what he knows about the bay. It was a fine time to be an intern.

Today, Dave has lost count of all the strippers he's caught, but he does keep track of the big fish. Since the start of the 2019 Susquehanna Flats Catch and Release season, Dave has caught and released 10 striped bass over 40 inches, all on artificial lures. He's sure to catch more. Last year Dave got 29 big strippers over 40 inches. Dave never uses bait because he doesn't want to risk harming fish by gut-hooking them. In fact, he has never kept a striper over 36 inches, even when perfectly legal to do so.

Dave loves catching all species of fish, but he considers catching walleye to be the peak of fishing skills. He says anybody can cast a piece of worm and catch a catfish or a white perch, but a good angler needs to know a lot more to catch walleye consistently. Walleye have particular habits which require a better understanding. Dave explained that walleye like to drop out of the current, similar to a yellow perch, and sit calmly on the bottom. He says the most important factor to remember is that walleye favor low light conditions. In his lifetime of fishing, Dave has caught three walleye measuring 28 inches.

This past winter he got one 27 3/4 inches long. Dave has heard rumors of 30-inch walleye being caught below the dam, although he has never seen one that big. Dave uses top of the line tackle. The day we fished he let me use his 7' medium action, G. Loomis rod paired with a Shimano Stradic 2500 size reel.

Dave's Top 5 walleye lures are: 1)

Smithwick Rattlin' Rogue in chrome, fire tiger or blue/silver. 2) Rapala X-Rap, size 10 in perch or hot purple. 3) Storm ThunderStick in gold and black. 4) Rapala Husky Jerk, size 9 and 11 in fire tiger and hot tiger. 5) Renegade Laser minnow, in electric chicken color, no longer made. He recommends casting the lure out, and while keeping a taut line, let the current do the work.

Walleye have tough, bony and toothy mouths. Since their bite is subtle, it is very important to set the hook. Shore anglers are more successful than those fishing from a boat because walleye swim near the shore to feed, especially at night. In general, walleye use darkness for cover at night and deep water for cover during the day.

The most walleye Dave has ever caught in one trip is 19. Before that it was 11, and prior to that it was 8, way back in 1987, all below the dam. Dave claims a good bite can easily occur under the right conditions. The main reason for Dave's success is the amount of time he puts in fishing. To become a better angler, there is no substitute for time on the water. Dave likes to say, "There are too many spots and too little time!" And, "A person needs more than one lifetime to fish this river!"

Dave runs the tackle shop at Joppatowne Marina. For more fishing tips stop by the shop to see him. Dave loves to talk about fishing, but if you hear him whispering, he might be getting ready to cast a line!



Dave McCollum holding a big Susquehanna striper.



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# Fishing & Hunting Journal

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*A word from our Pastor-*

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## “Tackle Box Tim”

### Color Patterns for Bass

Go to any tackle shop and you will see a full spectrum of colors across the shelves and peg boards. You’ll find hard baits and soft plastics in every color and sheen from natural hues to June bug to limetreuse and bubble gum. Saying that bass fishing is huge across the country is an understatement. So, to appease the anglers fishing countless lakes and tidal estuaries, lure manufacturers have to show a wide appeal. There are colors and patterns that will work in most parts of the country, while certain hues are more localized. Still, some colors are for catching fish, and others are made to catch fishermen.

In Maryland, largemouth bass are targeted in brackish tidal waters and in reservoirs. Some color patterns cross over between fresh and brackish waters, while other hues can be exclusive. Also, some colors work better at a particular time of year. For a species with a brain the size of a pea, a largemouth bass can befuddle the best of us when it comes to color choices. Let’s try to clear things up for local waters.

There are universal color/lure combinations that flat out catch bass. A black/blue jig, a chartreuse/white spinnerbait, and a black/chartreuse square bill crankbait can be found in most bass fisherman’s tackle boxes. Blue fleck worms, and green pumpkin craws and stick worms are also tackle box staples.

In late winter and early spring, bass tend to bite red lures. This holds true on drinking water lakes, on the Potomac River, and on the upper bay. Anglers cast crankbaits, rattle traps, and of late, spinnerbaits in red patterns. The two hard baits will often have some sort of crawfish markings or curved lines on the side for some contrast.

Mid-spring finds a color change. A popular pattern is called spring craw. It varies across lure makers. The base starts with chartreuse sides, dark crawfish markings, and an orange belly. You may find this base with either a red, orange, or brown back. These patterns are found on crankbaits and traps. The red or orange back would be best for dingy water. The brown back will serve you well in clear

to stained water

Our BFL tournament friend Rick Haber has found that yellow perch patterns work well in spring on the Potomac. He has even had spinnerbaits and chatter baits custom made to imitate the perch. On the upper bay, you have white perch, and shad leaving spawning grounds. Casting hard baits and skirted baits in these patterns makes sense.

Crawfish are dark in color when they first emerge from the rock and mud in spring. Jigs and soft plastics in black with blue or red flake, along with dark green pumpkin are the prime hues. Most anglers will be using large baits in these colors because crawfish are that size. Matching size and color is always a good idea.

A bass is genetically programmed to protect its bed from predation during the spawning period. Two big egg and fry bandits are blue gills and sunfish. June bug, being purple with emerald flakes, is a good hue to match blue gills. Lures with a green, yellow, and orange color combination mimic the sunnies. During post spawn, bass get their revenge. The two bream species often take over the bass beds for their reproduction rituals. This makes them an easily located meal for bass. Keeping June bug and sunfish patterns tied on through late June is worth your while.

Scott Thompson, a veteran reservoir angler, relies on brown and green crawfish pattern, and fire tiger Bomber crankbaits. They work well in Liberty, Loch Raven, and Prettyboy Reservoirs during the summer. Several years ago, Loch Raven saw an influx of shad to the lake. There, he will also cast shad colored crankbaits, spinnerbaits, and chatter baits.

Rick Haber is also an advocate of the fire tiger Bomber in 2A and 5A sizes for the Potomac during the dog days. He also likes to match to predominant color of crawfish with his jigs and stick worms. All will have green pumpkin with red flake in their hues.

On the upper bay, green pumpkin is a go-to color for jigs and craw baits. However, white patterns seem to work best for stick worms in the heat of summer. Shad patterns and chartreuse patterns seem to be the better colors when targeting summertime bass on the flats and northern-most upper bass waters. I found out a few years ago how effective the pearl stick worm can be for bass on Middle River. Here they also like sunfish and chartreuse pattern spinnerbaits and crankbaits. Bass here also preferred green pumpkin jigs and craws with a hint of blue. I believe this hue matches the blue crabs that make their way into the river during summer months.

Many times, adding contrast to the color of soft plastic lures can get you the bites you’ve been missing. Markers and dips from Spike It and Dyeing2Fish have a variety of colors—chartreuse, red, blue, orange—to change the appearance; and scents such as garlic, shad, anise, and grape jelly. If your straight up green pumpkin or June bug bait isn’t drawing strikes, a dip of the tail or swipe of the marker could make a difference.

The next time you find yourself head-scratching at your local tackle shop, remember these tips for color selection. Whether you are searching for bass on the central Maryland reservoirs or in the tidal rivers and creeks, these are patterns and color combinations to choose.



Randy Yarnall shows a bass that fell victim to a green pumpkin craw bait.

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## “Tuna The Tide”

### The Rise and Fall of Striper Fishing

By Captain Mark Galasso

Tuna the Tide Charter Fishing

Catchy title, huh. Bet you thought I was going to make some earth shattering proclamation about the current affairs of the East Coasts most important Coastal Game fish. The fact is I'm tempted. But in this case were going to discuss one of my favorite ways to catch them, vertical jigging. It's a technique I learned a long time ago from some friends and guides that were part of the Maryland Bass Federation. They honed their skills trying to lure finicky Bass out of cover with various lure presentations. In many cases Big Bass would hide in cover in deeper water close to the bottom waiting to ambush small fish and other prey. Either the cover was too thick or too deep to cast traditional lipped lures like crank baits and diving minnows.

They found that by dropping weighted jigs and grubs to depths just above the cover and imparting an action creating a bait that looked stressed huge Bass could be enticed to leave their sanctuary and enjoy an easy meal. When these Bass fisherman decided to test their skills on Striped Bass (Rockfish) they found there wasn't much difference.

Striped Bass use basically three methods to detect prey. When conditions are right they use their sense of vision. They actually see pretty well and their eyes are adapted to the environment in which they live. When that fails they have a pretty good sense of smell. Just like us they can use

their sense of smell to find prey even though they can't see it. Anyone who has chummed for Rock in water with just inches of visibility can attest to that. But where Rockfish, as well as most other fish, really shine is their ability to detect and analyze motion. They do this through a nervous system connected to a lateral line that travels most of the length of their body.

It is important that we understand this when we fish, and how we trick fish into trying to eat a piece of rubber, lead or plastic. I recently went to a CCA meeting at which Sean Kimbro was the guest speaker. He was discussing fishing in general but something he said clicked in my head. I'll paraphrase. But the jist of it was you need to fully understand, and feel what your bait is doing at all times to be successful. This is especially true when vertical jigging. So how do we stack the odds in our favor.

First and foremost you need the proper equipment. I've had the advantage recently of working at Shore Tackle and Custom Rods building rods and spooling reels. We recommend for vertical jigging relatively short, 6ft to 6.5ft medium or medium/heavy power rods. These rods should have a fast or extra fast tip section. You need to get a good reel with a smooth drag system capable of holding at least 150 to 250 yards of 14lb test mono. I use mono only because it is easy to remove tangles. There are many good reels on the market and you need to choose one that feels balanced TO YOU with the rod you use. Penn Battles are great but tend to be on the heavy side. Conversely Shimano Stradics are extremely light and durable. Braided line is probably better. Use a braided line rated around

30#. It has less than half the diameter of mono and has virtually no stretch. It cuts through the water better than mono so you don't have to have as much out to get down to the same depths. And the fact is the less line you have out the better contact you have with your lure. We use specially built rods with graphite butts and aluminum reel seats. This set up has a better transfer of energy from the rod tip through the rod and reel to your hand, and ultimately your nervous system. You don't want anything like cork to absorb energy.

So let's put our system into practice. We fish small light weight jigs. Just heavy enough to get down to where the fish are. These are tied to a short, 2ft leader and a small barrel swivel. Then to the main line. We always start out with small flicks of the wrist to impart an action on the lure, trying to imitate a crippled bait fish falling to the bottom. The trick is not only to impart the action but to actually feel what your lure is doing. Both on the rise and ESPECIALLY on the fall. I can generally catch fish 40ft down with only 1/2 ounce of weight. If I think I have too much line out to keep contact with my lure I'll use more weight. The downside to this is the more weight the faster the lure falls through the strike zone. And if you really think about it fish are looking forward and up, not down and the strike zone might only be a few feet vertical.

As you become more accom-

plished at keeping contact with your jig on the fall you can jig harder and more radical. If we're fishing structure like Oyster bars we start on the boom and work our way up through the water column. If we are fishing suspended fish in open water we let our line out until we think were close to the strike zone and start jigging. If we don't get a bite we let more line out or bring line in. And remember as wind and current change drift speeds we have to adapt.

We really tested and honed our vertical jigging skills at the Bay Bridge tunnel. Big Stripers would hold on the down current side of the bridge pilings. Sometimes the water would be over 60 feet deep and the fish were half way down. The strike zone was small and you had to drift your jig through it while fighting waves and current. If your jig swung through the right spot the fish would leave the shelter of the piling and lightly pick up your lure. In a second they would realize it wasn't a fish and spit it out and return to their piling. If your line was even a little slack and you didn't feel the pick up you never knew you had a bite. And the fact was a 5lb fish and a 50lb fish picked up the lure the same way. You didn't know which one it was until you set the hook.

Practice make perfect. Our season is just starting and it's time to practice. So learn the rise and fall of jigging for Stripers. It's fun and effective.



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# Striped bass spring trophy season cancelled in the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia

In an attempt to get ahead of pending changes to striped bass regulations, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission on Tuesday voted unanimously to cancel the upcoming spring trophy season in the Chesapeake Bay.

Anglers will still be able to catch and keep two rockfish measuring between 20 and 28 inches long from May 16 through June 15. All catches must be reported to the VMRC.

Late last year, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission determined that the coastal striped bass population had been overfished and that overfishing was still taking place. The commission is expected to issue amendments to its regulations that will force states to cut back on their catches.

Virginia commissioners decided that recommendations from staff and members of the Finfish Management Advisory Committee to get ahead of changes were in order. The commission voted 7-0 to cancel the seasons.

“This action was taken just for this season, but more actions are coming,” said VMRC Deputy Commissioner Ellen Bolen. “Nothing for this fall or next spring has been decided yet.”

Virginia angling interest in the spring trophy season is limited, largely in part because so many other species are migrating into the area.

And while nearly 70 percent of the members of the Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association agreed to support the cancellation, most admit their support was only because few participate in the season.

“I was personally against it in favor of a coast-wide plan,” said association president Mike Avery. “But we did a poll and presented the results as that.”

Avery said that for Virginia to voluntarily take away parts of a fishery that account for only 3.3% of the coastal quota makes no sense.

“So we went from, what, taking 3.3% to maybe 3.1%?” he wondered. “Maryland takes about 40 percent of the quota and they’ve done nothing.

“This was just a feel-good exercise for Virginia.”

Avery said his membership also was concerned that there was no motion to cut back on the commercial take.

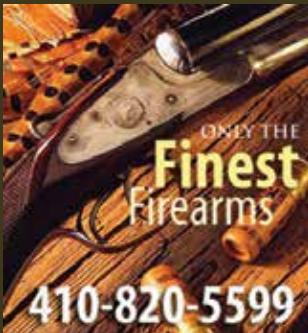


Gregory J Hall with 2 very impressive Snakeheads.

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Hunter Gottlieb and his trusty companion with his spring Tom.

Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after. Thank you, dear God, for this good life and forgive us if we do not love it enough. The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of what is elusive but attainable, a perpetual series of occasions for hope.



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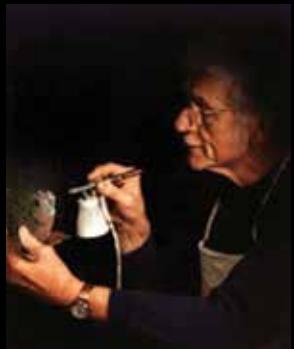
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A stringer of Snakeheads caught near Colonial Beach.

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Rich Bohle is at it again with this nice Tom he got this spring. Photo courtesy of Clydes Sport Shop.

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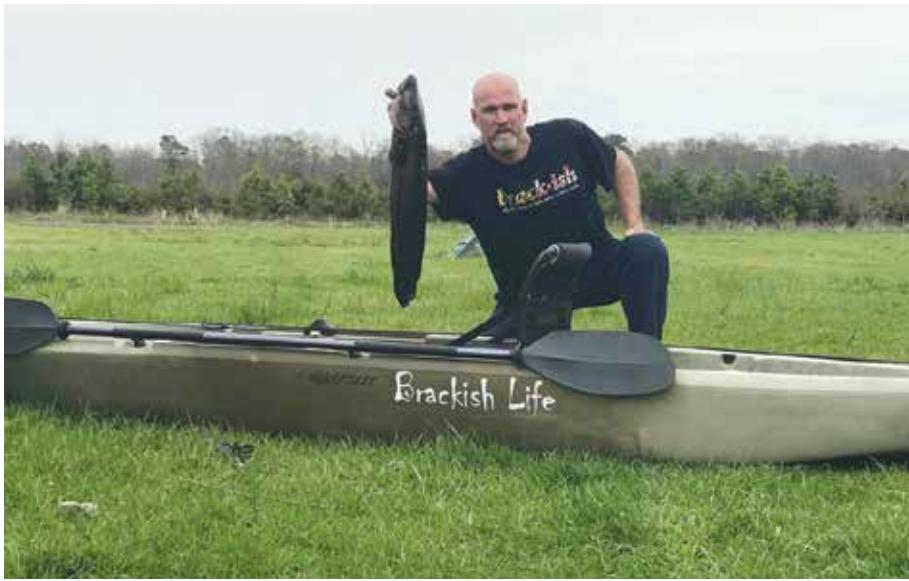
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Christopher Dixon with a "Brackish Life" Snakehead.



Ange Harclerode caught and quickly released this Susquehanna striper on April 2, 2019. Photo by Capt. Carter Dudzinski

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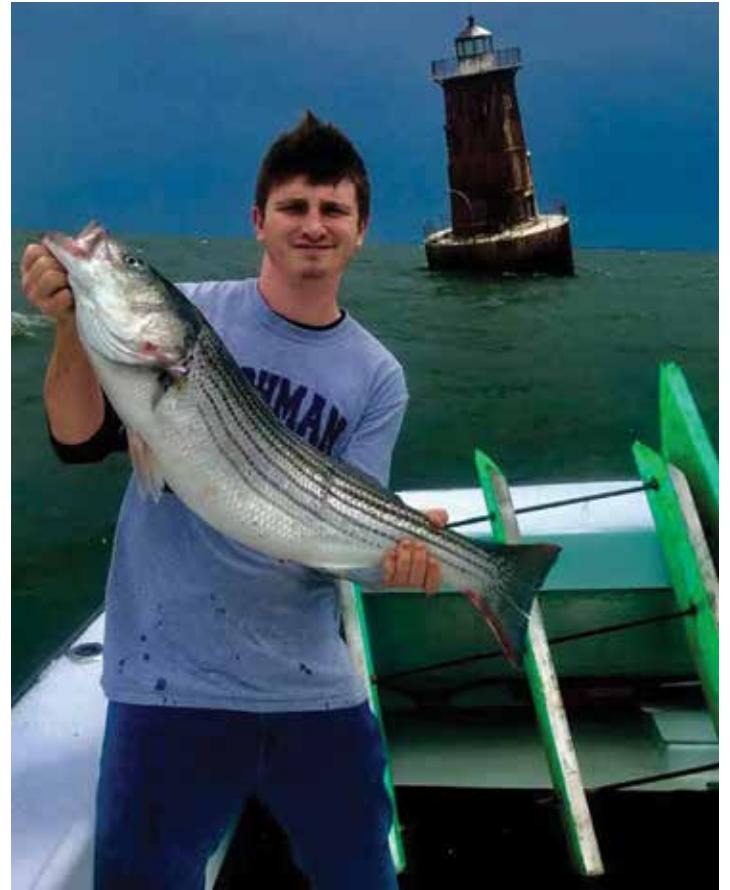
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**“Guests, like fish, begin to smell after three days.”**



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## Letter from CCA

Trophy season opened last weekend with tough spring weather, and hit and miss reports continue to come in as concerns brew for what the future may hold for our beloved rockfish, Maryland's state fish.

As many debate the causes of the decline in population, I'd say it's very simple, the management plan did not work, and it's time to take action to reverse the alarming decade long trend of declines in the population. Unfortunately some stakeholder groups don't feel changes should be made on regulations that govern their catch limits, and many prefer to point fingers and play a blame game.

Virginia managers took action last week, and teamed up with some northern states to call for swift changes in management, and chose to close their recreational trophy season with a 7-0 vote by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. While this pro-active action is certainly a step in the right direction, it will take strong action by all states and all sectors to have a lasting change on the future of striped bass. Let's not forget Virginia's gill net fishery that also targets large pre-spawn female fish, the exact portion of the population that managers must seek to rebuild.

Next week, the ASMFC will work to return fishing mortality rates to sustainable levels, and rebuild a balanced and abundant biomass of striped bass.

The overall striped bass plan clearly needs a redesign, but the one thing is clear, the board must act quickly, and initiate measures that will lead to regulatory changes for the 2020 fishing season, and hold all states accountable for reductions harvest across the board.

Fisheries management is a complicated and challenging task, but in times like these it should become very simple. If less fish are being born, less fish should be taken from the system. It's time to put the fish first.

Tight Lines,

David Sikorski  
Executive Director  
CCA Maryland

## General Norman Schwarzkopf

**“What people don’t understand is that this is something that we only have in America. There is no other country in the world where the ordinary citizen can go out and enjoy hunting and fishing. There’s no other nation in the world where that happens. And it’s very much a part of our heritage”**

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## “Montana Grant”



By Grant Soukup

### TROUT or BUST!!!

Maryland trout season is here. Many anglers watch for the stocking schedule to decide when to fish. First come first serve is their attitude. It is true that freshly stocked trout will be concentrated and anxious to eat. For fishermen with poor fishing skills, this may be the only time they catch anything.

The truth is that 90% of the fish are caught by 10% of the fishermen. Good fishermen catch fish when they fish. They are not reliant on a stocking truck. They pay more attention to their skills, tackle, and mindset.

Some fishermen focus on home waters. They learn every rock, nook, and cranny. Baited up with this knowledge,

and a variety of other goodies. Spinners are great for locating trout. Panther Martins, Rooster tails, Mepps, Blue Foxes, and other minnow imitations work well.

Other gear includes a decent pair of hip boots that don't leak, a small landing net and of course a vest and hat. Pay attention to the local laws regarding felt soles and use a net appropriate for Catch and Releasing fish.

A creel or Artic Creel fish bag will also help. If you plan to kill the fish do so at once. If they are flopping in the cooler or struggling on the stringer, lactic acid builds up in the meat. This will change the flavor. Put the fish on ice as soon as you can. Keeping them wet is also important. A plastic bag will speed up deterioration of your fish.

Maryland offers stocked Rainbow trout, Golden Trout, and Brown trout. If you catch anything else, they either swam down from Pennsylvania or are reproducing in the stream. Golden trout, also called “Shills” or “Palominos” are a hybrid albino Rainbow trout. They tend to fight hard and rarely reproduce. Golden trout are the Mules in the trout world. If you see a Golden trout, be assured that other trout are nearby.

Polaroid Glasses are essential for success when fishing. These glasses cut the reflected light and glare so that you can see into the trout's world.

Once you see the fish, now you observe their behavior and know where to fish.

Dress for success when trout fishing. Bright colored shirts and hats will spook the fish. Stalk your quarry. Wear colors that match the background. Fishing camo means sky, clouds, and forest camo. Bright colors also attract more flies and mosquitos.

The states website displays stocking information, stream locations, fishing reports and helpful tips. Make sure that you have the proper trout fishing license and stamps. Examine the limits and rules. 5 trout are a limit. Understand the limits and rules. Ignorance is no excuse. Trout are stocked to be caught. Most of the trout waters are seasonal at best. It is rare that the waters stay cold and full enough for trout to survive a full year.

If you prefer to Catch and Release fish, there are also Fish for Fun waters

throughout the state. These waters tend to be more year around fisheries. The waters are truly trout waters. This means cold and healthy streams.

Trout are where you find them. Stocked trout will swim for miles in search of comfortable waters. Don't be afraid to hike to remote upstream or downstream haunts. Holdovers can also be found in these prime spots far from the beaten paths. Usually an underground spring, shade, and cover offer a perfect trout habitat.

Don't get greedy! Follow the limits and rules. Natural Resource Police are often undercover. Optics, tree cams, and other techniques easily catch the poachers. Your cell phone is also a quick tool to call the DNR Police when you see law breakers. We all must protect, monitor, and be Stewards of our sport.

Just because the stocking truck stops doesn't mean the fishing stops. If the weather stays cool and the waters stay full and flowing, trout fishing can be great into the summer. As the weather improves, wet wadding is a great way to spend a morning or evening chasing trout. Maryland also opens the Delayed Harvest waters for harvest.

Pennsylvania also offers great trout fishing. Don't be afraid to travel across the Mason Dixon Line to enjoy their fisheries. This state stocks brook trout and BIGGER trout. There are also many Clubs and Groups that stock

quality fish in the Put and Take or Catch and Release fisheries.

Trout fishing skills and tackle also translate to other fishing. Perch, crappie, smallmouth bass, and bluegills are also great sport on Ultra-Light tackle. The more fish you catch, the better fisherman you will become. Learn how to adjust the drag on your reel and use the lightest line you are comfortable with.

Basic skills like tying proper knots, sharpening hooks, casting accurately, and catching and releasing fish are learned skills. You must experience these skills to master them. Presentation is the ultimate one skill that is most important. Your lure or bait must be presented as if it is not attached to a hook and line.

Fishing is an addiction. You will never get enough bites, catch enough fish, or fish enough days. Embrace the sport. It is about skills, limits, rules, dedication, attitudes, and fun. Sharing your skills with others may be the best part of becoming a fisherman. If you think you are a Master Caster and Angler, teach someone else to have your success.

Fish more, fish harder!

Montana Grant

For more Montana Grant, catch him at [www.montanagrantsfishing.com](http://www.montanagrantsfishing.com).



they know where the fish end up and how to catch them. Their attitudes are based upon having fun and sharing the sport with others. Limits are a routine task. If they don't feel like cleaning fish, they throw them back.

Trout Trekkers like to travel to various waters throughout the region. It is a challenge to catch trout in every trout water in the state. The trout are basically the same and often come from the same hatcheries. Wild trout are returned and saved for the future.

The basic tackle for a Maryland Trout fisherman is an ultra-light rod of 5-6-foot inn length. A decent Ultra-Light reel with a great drag. Light line in the 2-4 lb. test range is ideal. Lures, crankbaits, and hooks are small. Size 10-12 are perfect. Hooks are sharpened and tippet is often used as their terminal connection.

Baits include nightcrawlers, meal worms, corn, power bait, salmon eggs,



Whitney's first trout keeps her smiling.



## Coastal Report

By Capt. Mark  
Sampson

A couple years ago I did a story about falling in the water. Highlighting some of my own blunders, I described a few of the more embarrassing - if not downright "humorous" splashdowns I've had over the years. I wrote that story in the summer, but right now it's spring and falling in the water now is no joke. Cold air, cold water, and heavy clothing can be a deadly mix that can end the life of someone in just a few short minutes.

Falling-in is not something most people plan on when they are around water. In fact, I'm pretty sure most folks plan "not" to fall-in, so that not only are they not prepared if it happens, they also do not take extra precautions to ensure it doesn't happen in the first place. We'll look at how to prepare in the event that it happens in a moment, but first lets see how to prevent an unnecessary cold-water bath.

Do you know what is the number-one reason why people fall overboard from a boat? Here's a hint - it's usually men... So the answer is: The reason people fall overboard is a situation whereby a man attempts to "take a leak" over the side of the boat. If you think about it, the whole set up is a recipe for disaster. The fellow would likely be pushed up as close to the side of the boat as possible, knees against the gunwale, and likely holding onto the boat with only one hand, if the vessel rolls or drops off a wave the guys feet can kick out and over he goes. Talk about wetting your pants!

Preventing that type of plunge can be as simple as requiring that everyone uses the boat's head, and if the vessel doesn't have one - require that they use a bucket. Stopping the boat whenever someone needs to "go" might seem like a time-wasting inconvenience but it can also be a lifesaver. You can also hold the back of your buddies jacket or belt to steady them while they go - it might not be a glamorous job but neither is fishing your friend out of the big cold pond.

Skippers should also ensure that no one has a chance to fall overboard without being observed. A few years ago a Delmarva boat was running out in the dark and didn't realize until they were close to their offshore fishing grounds that they were minus one passenger. Somewhere along the way a fellow ended up in the water. It's hard to imagine the horror he must have felt to watch the boat run away from him in the darkness. Miraculously after 10-12 hours of treading water (no lifejacket) he was spotted the next morning and picked up by another boat. No one saw him go overboard because no one was watching, for the rest of the ride out those in

the cabin thought he was on the bridge and those on the bridge thought he was in the cabin. Incidences like that are not uncommon and will occur even during the day.

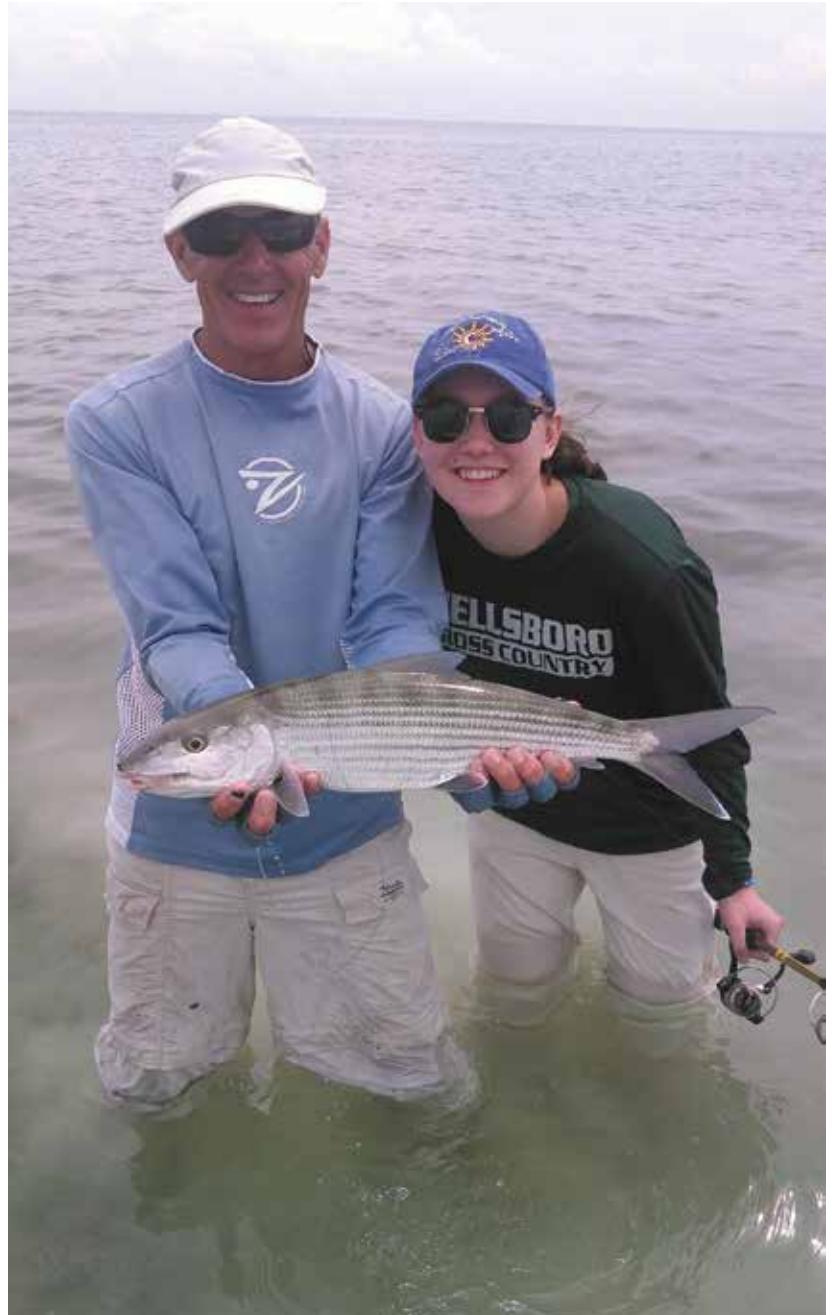
People also end up in the water by falling off the bow of the boat. Cars have seatbelts to keep us from flying forward during a sudden stop - but not boats. If a boat hits bottom while traveling along at even a modest clip everyone aboard who is not holding on to something very securely is going to fly forward. Passengers close to the bow are likely to be ejected right off the boat. To make matters worse, if the boat continues to move forward it could very possibly run right over those in the water. Hopefully by now we're all aware that it's not legal to ride on a moving boat with their legs hanging over bow. But when it comes right down to it - allowing passengers to ride up anywhere on the bow of a moving boat is akin to letting someone sit on the hood of your car as you drive around the neighborhood. It's all good until a dog runs in front of the car and you have to tap your brakes!

Boats aren't the only platforms from which people end up in the water. Piers, bulkheads, rock jetties, marsh banks, even a walk along a sandy shoreline can have someone splashing around in neck deep water when they take one step too many over an unexpected drop off. In the summer the algae that grows on hard surfaces can make them extremely slippery and in the winter just a little bit of frost on a deck or a dock can be disastrous.

Perhaps the one saving grace it that during the cold-water months there's a lot fewer people spending time on or near the water than during the summer, so there are much fewer accidental splashdowns when hypothermia works at its quickest. Sportsmen, however, are not so inclined to let a little cold weather stand between them and their quarry and so are more likely to be the ones who end up unexpectedly submerged in ice cold water. Careful attention to safety concerns is extra important for anyone who ventures on or near the water anytime, particularly during the cold weather months. Watch your footing on decks, docks and rocks, take measures to ensure that no passengers

on boats have an opportunity to fall over the side no matter what they're doing. With the advent of new fishing a boating season this is the best time to make a firm commitment to follow the number-one boater safety course recommendation - wear a life jacket at all times!

Mark Sampson  
Fish Finder Adventures LLC  
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**In March, Hope Sampson from Wellsboro Pa caught this 24" bonefish while fishing with her uncle Capt. Mark Sampson in the Florida Keys.**

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Captain Brian Councill took a day off last month to bag this nice Tom.

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Capt Andy Wayson taking a break for some post spawn jumbo yellow perch at his "Secret Spot" on the Blackwater Wildlife Reserve.

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## “The Last Word”

### ***Has Catch and Release Become Catch and Kill?***

*By Steve Huettner*

The latest news for Striped Bass, or more commonly known to all Marylanders as rockfish is depressing to say the least. During the February meeting of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) the most recent study said the striped bass population is overfished, and has been overfished for the sometime.

Read that last sentence again, because it's not a typo and it's not made up. Striped bass, the iconic species of Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay is once again in trouble. The same fishery that was closed for five years and declared recovered, is once again looking at drastic reductions to save striped bass.

Anglers who fished the 2018 spring trophy season knew something was wrong. Hundreds of boats fished the bay for days on end without marking a fish, none the less catching one. Theories on what happened to the fish were plenty. Fish had entered the bay early, spawned, and left before the season started. Fish were still in the tributaries and hadn't entered the bay yet. Fisherman had caught all the big cows and there were few left to come back and spawn.

According to the biomass (a fancy word for how many females can make more fish) striped bass fell below 70 metric tons. Translation: striped bass have been overfished, and have been overfished since 2012. That's six years Atlantic States did more harm than good to the resource.

One of the major findings in the study recreational fishing resulted in a much higher rate of mortality (dead

fish). The new estimate by biologists estimate that 9 percent of fish die after being handled. In 2017 the amount of fish that died from being caught and released was higher than amount legally caught and kept by recreational anglers. Catch and release killed more fish catch and kill for grill.

Increasing the size limit for fish during the summer season in 2015 probably had a detrimental effect on the rise of the dead discard. How many 16 inch fish did someone have to catch in order to get a legal fish?

What about the myriad of light tackle catch and release fisherman who ply the Chesapeake? During a good trip they might catch and release 20 to 30 fish. Doing the math with a nine percent mortality catching 20 fish will result in two dead fish and 30 fish equates to 3 dead fish. Does someone who goes out and catches his two fish for the grill have less impact than a catch and release fisherman?

Over the course of ten years writing for the Journal I have called out and questioned groups and industries the affect natural resources negatively. Shady seafood dealers, illegal gill nets, and fisherman catching over the limit have all contributed to outrage and condemnation.

Nine percent mortality from recreational catch and release is something the recreational community needs to address. This will cause some serious soul searching on what fishing is. Most catch and release fisherman I know are passionate about the resource and want to protect it, but we cannot blame others if don't have our house in order.

Striped bass have become the primary species that are fished in the Chesapeake starting in April and

running through December. With the increase in technology, gear, social media, and numbers of fisherman can the resource not only survive but thrive?

Moving forward there will be many proposals, arguments and questions regarding striped bass and its future management. These are good things, as people are passionate about the resource. Maryland hosts 70% of breeding stock, and also acts as nursery for young fish that populate the East Coast from North Carolina to Maine. Maryland needs to take the lead.

Do we get rid of the spring trophy season and drop the minimum size

limit to 15 inches so people can catch their two fish and be done? Outlaw catch and release fishing completely? Prohibit J hooks and live bait? Do we make fishing like hunting? Go out, get your limit and get off the water. Decrease the amount of rods you're allowed to fish and hours you can have lines in the water? These are just some questions that will be batted around and argued.

With an industry in the hundreds of millions of dollars related to rockfish it will not be easy. I hope that all parties can come to a consensus and do what is best for the resource. Anything less would be an embarrassment.



**Jarvin Hernandez with an opening day Striper aboard the 'Kingfish' II with Captain Harry at the helm.**

# TUSCARORA OUTFITTERS



410-708-1616



## Grilled Wild Turkey Rolls

These Grilled Wild Turkey Rolls are amazingly delicious. Need something to do with that meat taking up space in your freezer? Trust us, this recipe is off-the-charts. It's easy to make and super versatile – if you don't have wild turkey, grab some from the store or experiment with other meat. Give it a try and let us know how it goes!



1 lb thick cut pepper bacon  
1 to 1 1/2 lbs wild turkey breast  
3 whole jalapenos enough for about 15 slices

### Marinade

1/4 cup olive oil  
2 tbsp white vinegar  
2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce  
1/2 tsp ground pepper  
2 cloves garlic or 1 tsp garlic powder  
1 tsp salt  
1 tbsp brown sugar

Cut turkey into 1 and 1/2 cubes. Mix marinade. Let meat marinate for a minimum of 2 hours.

Cut each piece of bacon in half. Place one slice of jalapeno and one cube of turkey into center of bacon slice. Tightly roll bacon over turkey and hold in place with a toothpick.

Heat grill to medium heat (around 300-350 degrees). Place rolls on sides and cook slowly turning every few minutes. Once the bacon is fully cooked, your turkey should also be fully cooked. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Recipe by and images from [SomethingSweetSomethingSalty.wordpress.com](http://SomethingSweetSomethingSalty.wordpress.com). Check out the site for tons of amazing recipes.



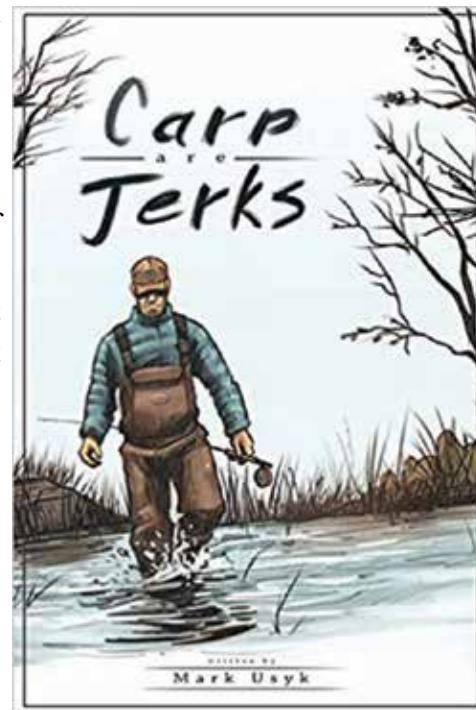
Rich Watts with his personal best 8 pounder on a live minnow from Blackwater Refuge  
Photo THIS time is by Angelina Watts.

## Book of the Month

### CARP ARE JERKS

by Mark J Usyk (Author), Sean Usyk (Cover Design), Jordan Ross (Foreword)

From the self-proclaimed “marginal” fly fisherman and author of *Reflections of a Fly Rod* comes a unique look at life and the left hooks it throws: A look straight down the barrel through the guides of a fly rod. Mark chases everything that swims... Trout, Bass, Steelhead, and every now and then when no one is looking, carp. But is he really chasing fish, or is it something more?



### Editorial Reviews

#### Review

They Aren't fishing stories. They're stories about life, where fishing happens. -Dale Coria, blue collar maintenance guy.

Even if you think you have no interest in fishing, you'll love this. It goes deeper than fishing. And it's excellent. -Melanie Lopata, author, editor.

Will you enjoy this book? well, with a line like ..”as if it was a Rottweiler chasing a cat while dragging an old lady down the street still holding tight to the leash. Praying the cat either climbs a tree or has a heart attack and dies, because she knows there's no other way that dog is stopping.” I'll just say this... a) Enjoy the ride. b) Bring a toothbrush to clean the bugs from your teeth, c) Hold On! This Rotty just spied a cat! -Les Booth, CIA, Editor/Publisher: Kype Media

Mark Usyk has a way of writing that makes you feel like you're not only reading about his adventures, but you become part of the adventures. -Charles N Cantella, author of “A Touch Of Grayling”

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## MISC.

Looking to join duck hunting group or obtain a lease for same. Please call Richard. 410.375 8023

Wanted: membership in exclusive deer hunting club with 3-4 members. Will pay top dollar! 609-661-9873

Group of responsible hunters looking for Farms to lease for the 2019-2020 season Deer and Waterfowl 443-845-9695

Prime Sika/turkey/waterfowl Dorchester County properties for sale or possible lease for 2018 -2019 seasons.

Wanted: Three father/son hunters seeking prime Sika deer hunting property, Dorchester County, sale or lease 856 981 6415

Wanted Prime Sika Deer hunting lease in Dorchester County. Father/son 856 981 6415

Local man looking for farms and acreage to lease for upcoming hunting season for waterfowl deer turkey 410- 714- 2200

5 - Waterfowl shoreline blind sites for lease on Raccoon Creek, 1+ mile of shoreline. Zip

code ,21613.

5 Waterfowl shoreline blind sites for on the Honga River at Piney Point, shoreline runs from Wingate cove to Hearn's cove, Zip code 21675  
Contact Owner Tom for above leases 410-253-9048

Group of 5 experienced, respectful hunters looking for goose hunting privileges on a suitable property in Baltimore, Harford, Carroll, Cecil, Talbot, Queens Ann, Kent or Dorchester counties. Please call Steve 410 560-3252

Looking to lease a deer hunting property for 2019/20 season - 410-708-0695



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# Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons Proposed

After receiving and reviewing public input, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has selected the 2019 – 2020 migratory game bird hunting seasons. These recommendations are now awaiting final approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In addition to close consultation with Governor Hogan's Wildlife Advisory Commission and the Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee, the department conducted an extensive public outreach effort to develop and propose the 2019-20 migratory game bird hunting season package.

"These interactive steps involving public input are a critical component of our annual season selection process." Wildlife and Heritage Service Director Paul Peditto said. "We strive to offer hunting seasons that work for all Marylanders and we sincerely thank all those who took the time to provide input into this process."

Highlights of the department's recommendations include:

Youth waterfowl hunting days on Nov. 2, 2019 and Feb. 8, 2020;

Regular duck hunting season segments from Oct. 12-19, Nov. 16-29 and Dec. 16 – Jan. 31, 2020 with a daily bag limit of six, including two canvasbacks;

Migratory Atlantic Population Canada goose hunting segments from Dec. 20 to Jan. 4, 2020 and Jan. 14 to Jan. 31, 2020, with a daily bag limit of one;

The special season for sea ducks in the designated zone from Nov. 2 – Jan. 10, 2020; and

Mourning dove season segments from Sept. 2 – Oct. 19, Oct. 26 – Nov. 29, and Dec. 21 – Jan. 10, 2020.

The complete list of recommended migratory game bird seasons, once finalized, will appear in the 2019-2020 Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping and on the department's hunting webpage.

Licenses, stamps, and permits may be purchased online by phone at 855-855-3906, at a Natural Resources Service Center or at any one of the more than 250 Sport License Agents statewide.

Hunters with questions should call 410-260-8540.



Landyn, JP and Braylen Reynolds on a family fishing trip this spring.

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