



The Virginia Saltwater Review

Plans and Statistics Department
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by

Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division

OVERVIEW

Fishing reports from the Bay and Ocean regions have been very good this past week preceding the torrential rains that hit this past Thursday night. Croaker, cobia, and flounder are still highlighting the inshore fishery while amberjack, tuna, dolphin, marlin, and wahoo are making good showings offshore.

For flounder anglers. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) needs biological flounder data specifically from the recreational fishery. The Marine Sportfish Collection Project (see pages 7 and 8) will be collecting flounder through this upcoming fall, 2010, in a partnership with VIMS. Inside each of our project freezers, there will be two donation kits, one for the regular donations requested (dark bags with white forms), and a special flounder only donation kit (look for the white bags with yellow forms). Be sure to fill out all of the information requested and mark what reward item you want!



Wes Blow, a frequent contributor to the Marine Sportfish Collection Project, called to say he would be donating the fresh carcass (head to tail intact) to the project.

And congratulations to Dr. John Graves (VIMS) who caught his first-ever cobia this past week.

THE FISHING REPORT

Chincoteague

Donna, at Captain Bob's, reports that not a lot has changed around Croakerville (aka Chincoteague). Numerous croaker can still be found in the Chincoteague Channel from Marker 14 around the point to Daisy's Dockside. While not many croaker were available in the Assateague Channel last week, keeper flounder were hooked. Kingfish up to 14 inches were around outside of the inlet (near Marker 10), and blue crabbing has been excellent all season long. Sharks were still around but in lower abundance compared to recent weeks. Wreck fishing did well last week with spadefish, black sea bass, a few triggerfish, and tautog. Offshore fishing has been successful with tuna and large dolphin at the parking lot. There have been several whale sightings reported by the offshore boats as well lately.

Wachapreague

It was a great fishing weekend in Wachapreague, according to staff at the Wachapreague Marina. The white marlin tournament finished nicely with decent catches of white marlin, yellowfin tuna, wahoo, and dolphin mixed in. Inshore, the catches consisted mostly of small flounder with a lot of throwbacks.

Staff at Captain Zed's reported that a few grey trout were caught in the area last week, mostly in the surf and in Cedar Island Cove. Flounder were still around with a lot of throwbacks for every keeper. A few small croaker came in as well. Croaker were found at Drawing and Green channels and near Bull's Head. A few kingfish have been caught in the inlet as well.

Cape Charles

Despite the heat, fishermen from Chris' Bait and Tackle still had a great week and weekend. Cobia fishing was good in the area, and spadefish were reported around the pilings of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Croaker are biting very well out of Oyster, and citation flounder are still being reported. A few tarpon and shark releases were also reported.

Captain Cardone, of Cherrystone, reported good catches of croaker and kingfish last week. He also had several keeper flounder (the largest was 21 inches in length).

Lower Bay/Bridge Tunnel

Citation flounder were reported from Cobb's Marina this week. The largest, a WHOPPING 10 pounds, 15 ounces, was caught at the Concrete Ships at Kiptopeke. The other, also caught at the Concrete Ships, weighed in at 7 pounds.

Staff at Sunset Boating Center reported flounder catches this week. Most were found around the Hampton Bar.

It was a really exciting week at Wallace's Bait and Tackle—Kathy reported a 70-pound, 8-ounce cobia caught last week at Bluefish Rock. Several other citation flounder (7 pounds, 4 ounces and a HUGE 10 pounds, 1 ounce) were weighed in as well. Cobia and flounder were also reported from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel.

Flounder are everywhere, according to staff at the York River Fishing Center. They reported extremely good fishing in the last week. Flounder were hooked all over the Bay, and croaker were abundant in the York River, specifically down river near the oil refinery pier. Cobia and Spanish mackerel were found near the York Spit as well.

Ken Neill, of the Peninsula Anglers Club and IGFA representative, contributed the following:

Cobia fishing continues to be good in the Bay. Both chumming and sight-fishing are producing. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and along the Baltimore Channel have been productive for sight-fishermen. The Inner Middle Grounds, York Spit, and near Buoy 18 have been good areas to anchor up on a chum slick. Some nice catches of flounder are coming from the Cell/Buoy 42 area and from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Schools of large red drum are being encountered in the coastal ocean waters and at the mouth of the Bay. Schools of crevalle jack are roaming these same areas. Spanish mackerel and a lot of little bluefish can be caught while trolling spoons in the lower Bay and along the ocean front. Sheepshead and spadefish are available at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The spadefish are plentiful, but most are small. If you can get through the small fish, some larger fish are around. Sheepshead are being caught, but you really have to work for them. Over on the Eastern Shore, a lot of tarpon are being seen, and a few have been caught. The coastal shark population seems to be doing well. Various species seem to be here in abundance this year, and some of the inshore charters have targeted them with good success. Amberjack are a sure bet at the Southern Towers. They are also a possibility closer to home at structures like the Chesapeake Light Tower, 4A Drydock, and the Gulf Hustler. The offshore waters in the vicinity of the Norfolk Canyon have been producing some nice catches of dolphin. There are a good number of billfish around, especially white marlin. Some wahoo are being caught. The big news is the yellowfin tuna that showed up this week. They are a nice class of tuna with some weighing in at over 70 pounds.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

Recent cold fronts brought some welcome relief from the heat this week, and the fishing is still heating up. The inshore species are providing good action, while the offshore billfish scene is also picking up.

Flounder action has been steady recently. Anglers drifting with strip baits and minnows are finding nice fish at the Cell, the Hampton Bar, and the Thimble Shoal Channel. Plenty of keepers are taking bait, with several fish pushing near 8 pounds in the mix. Those dropping live bait and jigs on lower Bay structures are also finding nice fish along the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel near the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th islands, as well as the High Rise. Within Lynnhaven and Rudee inlets, flounder enthusiasts are finding fewer keepers, but those working for their catches are finding fish ranging up to 23 inches. Anglers are having good success using peanut bunker as bait within the Lynnhaven Basin lately.

Cobia continue to provide very good action, with the larger fish making a good showing this week. Chummers are scoring with a nicer class of fish using chunks of bunker, live eels, and live croaker fished on the bottom. The best locations for chumming lately are the seaside areas of Fisherman's Island, the Nine Foot Shoal, and Latimer Shoal. Sight-casters are finding incredible catches, with another state-leading fish hitting the scales. Red drum are also

schooling around the mouth of the Bay, with reports of schools also showing off the Virginia Beach oceanfront, especially off of Sandbridge.

Another new visitor has joined the summer-time show. Several sight-casters are reporting sightings of crevalle jack within the lower Bay. Often these members of the jack family are noted schooling around the lower Bay late in the summer, especially near the shoal areas and the Bay Bridge Tunnel. Although catches are not common, trolling spoons, sight-casting, and live bait can entice a hit.

According to the folks at Long Bay Pointe Bait and Tackle, puppy drum (juvenile red drum) action picked up within both Lynnhaven and Rudee inlets. Anglers are casting Gulp lures with good results, with most pups ranging over 20 inches. Medium-sized spot are also around, with Little Creek providing the best action this week, where a few fish are pushing to near 14 ounces. Smaller croaker are everywhere from the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The best hauls are coming from the backwaters of Oyster, where fish are pushing 2 pounds. The folks at Chris' Bait and Tackle report a few tarpon sightings and landings this week. Sheepshead action is still good, with fish to 14 pounds taking fiddler crabs or clam presented along the Bridge Tunnel complex. Plenty of triggerfish are also available in these same areas. Spadefish are still schooling around near shore wrecks, the span of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, especially the 3rd and 4th islands, as well as the High Rise area. Most of these fish are ranging to around 4 pounds.

Spanish mackerel action off the oceanfront is good lately, with larger fish pushing to over 2 pounds taking trolled spoons in water as shallow as 15 feet. Boats are finding schools of Spanish busting the surface as far as 5 miles out, making a fun catch for sight-casters. Taylor bluefish are also mixed in with the Spanish. While trolling for Spanish off Rudee Inlet this week, the crew of the *Git-R-Done* out of The Fishing Center boated and released a 24-inch sailfish on a Clark spoon. Amberjack are a no-brainer at the South Tower, where anglers are finding good numbers of big fish. A few barracuda are also coming from the same area.

The Virginia Beach Fishing Center reports that the billfish action is heating up this week, with multiple white marlin release citations coming from the fleet. Big yellowfin tuna pushing to over 60 pounds are also mixed in with the marlin. Gaffer and bailer dolphin are plentiful around the Canyon, while a few wahoo are making things interesting.

Virginia Middle Bay

Johnny, with Jett's Hardware, reports the heat has been keeping most anglers off the water lately. A few small bluefish were caught by trollers, and the Spanish mackerel have yet to show up in any good numbers. Large flounder have been caught near the jetties and Smith Point Light. A few striped bass were being caught last week as well.

Dan, with Smith Island Marina, hasn't seen many anglers on the water due to the heat. The ones who do brave the heat have been targeting spot. A few flounder were caught around the jetties, and bluefish were hooked in the area. No Spanish mackerel have been reported yet.

Butch, with Garrett's Marina, reported that a few croaker were caught last week. There were no reports of flounder this week, but the hot weather may be impacting the number of people chasing them.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Despite record-setting heat, a few people fished over the weekend and had good luck on croaker, white perch, and spot. Good-sized croaker and mullet were caught along the channel edge at Buoy 42. Flounder action at the Cell and Buoy 42 area was slow last week. A couple of boats reported a limit of fish, but the bite was very early in the morning. There were reports of large numbers of keeper flounder being caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Perhaps a second run of flounder is entering the Bay. If so, we should see them mid-Bay in a week or so. Several citation red drum were hooked around Buoy 42.

Virginia Beach

Staff at Virginia Beach Fishing Center reported fantastic offshore fishing last week. Catches included yellowfin tuna, white marlin, and numerous dolphin and amberjack. One sailfish was even caught two miles out of Rudee Inlet. Inshore catches included flounder in the inlet and taylor bluefish mixed with nice-sized Spanish mackerel from the beaches. At the local light towers, spadefish and shark have been hooked, and headboats in the Bay had success with croaker, black sea bass, and some flounder.

Paula, at Fishermen's Wharf Marina, reported good fishing at the Norfolk Canyon this week. Catches included white marlin, gaffer dolphin, and yellowfin tuna.

Virginia Piers

Spot, croaker, and numerous small flounder were reported at the Ocean View Pier, along with ribbon fish at night.

At the Lynnhaven Fishing Pier, anglers reported catches of spot and roundhead. Taylor bluefish and plentiful blue crabs were also caught.

Spot, bluefish, puffers, pigfish, white perch, grey trout, sea mullet, and croaker were all reported from a busy Buckroe Pier last week. Several sharks were also hooked during the night-time hours.

Outer Banks, NC

Offshore fishing out of Cape Hatteras continued to see good results for people chasing dolphin and tunas last week. Several boats were able to catch their limits of dolphin; yellowfin, blackfin, and bigeye, and skipjack tuna were all available for the taking. Trolling was also producing little tunny, bonito, wahoos, and king mackerel. The billfish bite dropped off a bit from last week with blue marlin dominating these catches. Deep-droppers had success with vermilion snapper, red snapper, snowy grouper, gag grouper, yellowedge grouper, triggerfish, and blueline tilefish. Small numbers of striped bass and red drum were being caught in the 8- to 10-mile range. Closer to shore, boaters had good luck with bluefish and Spanish mackerel. Pier and surf fishermen were able to catch large numbers of spot, croaker, and sea mullet. In the sounds and inlet, anglers saw improvement in the flounder and speckled trout catches. The shallow-water areas in the inlet were the best bet for flounder. Roanoke Sound bridges and sea grass beds in the early morning and late afternoon were best for the trout. Bottom

fishing in the deeper waters of the sound produced some good sea mullet action as well.

South of Oregon Inlet, the surf fishing on the point produced bluefish and Spanish mackerel in the late afternoons. The Avon beaches saw good action on bluefish, Spanish mackerel, and sea mullet.

Offshore fishing out of Hatteras Inlet produced good catches of dolphin and blackfin tuna. A scattering of sailfish were reported as well. Inshore, the Spanish mackerel and bluefish bite was strong.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

THE VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

***WANTS YOUR FISH....
TO MEASURE AND AGE.***

You catch it, you fillet it,

**but instead of throwing the remains in the trash,
please donate them to science.**

The Marine Sportfish Collection Project will focus on species of fish that are difficult to collect through the agency's normal sampling program. Anglers are asked to donate their filleted carcasses (head and tail intact) of legal and fresh-caught:



COBIA	SHEEPSHEAD	RED DRUM	BLACK DRUM	TAUTOG
KING MACKEREL	SPANISH MACKEREL	TILEFISH (BLUELINE OR GOLDEN)	WRECKFISH, SNOWY GROUPE, WARSAW GROUPE	BLUEFISH (GREATER THAN 16 POUNDS OR 36 INCHES)

In return for participating in the project, the agency will provide a ONE FREE PROJECT TEE SHIRT, HAT, BOAT WHISTLE OR MEASURING TAPE FOR EACH PARTICIPANT, PER MONTH of the DONATION.

Please visit these bait and tackle merchants to participate:

- Chris' Bait and Tackle (Capeville)
- Long Bay Pointe Marina (Virginia Beach)
- Wallace's Bait and Tackle (Hampton)
- Buckroe Fishing Pier (Hampton)
- Virginia Beach Fishing Center (Virginia Beach)



The Virginia Marine Resources Commission
And

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science

***WANT YOUR FLOUNDER...
TO MEASURE AND AGE.***

You catch it, you fillet it,

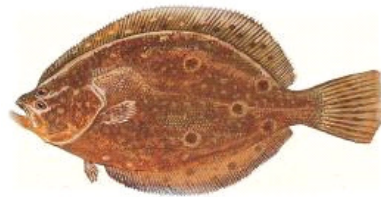
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The Marine Sportfish Collection Project focuses on species of fish that are difficult to collect through the agency's normal sampling program.

VMRC is working in cooperation with the VIMS to collect data on the harvest of recreational summer flounder. The goal of this project is to investigate the life history of male and female summer flounder within the recreational fishery along the Atlantic Coast.

Anglers are asked to donate their filleted carcasses (head and tail intact) of legal-sized (18.5 inches and above) and fresh-caught summer flounder to the Marine Sportfish Collection Project.



In return for participating in the project, the agency will provide a ONE FREE PROJECT TEE SHIRT, HAT, BOAT WHISTLE OR MEASURING TAPE FOR EACH PARTICIPANT, PER MONTH of the DONATION.

Please visit these merchants to participate and look for FLOUNDER ONLY collection kits within each project freezer:

Chris' Bait and Tackle (Capeville)

Long Bay Pointe Marina (Virginia Beach)

Wallace's Bait and Tackle (Hampton)

Buckroe Fishing Pier (Hampton)

Virginia Beach Fishing Center (Virginia Beach)

Rudee Inlet Station Marina (Virginia Beach)



Updated July 13, 2010

VIRGINIA SALTWATER Fisherman's Journal



Get Hooked!

Report at

www.vasaltwaterjournal.com

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.

The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing

experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

Individual measurement of caught, and released, on the most highly prized fish, such as red drum, striped bass, and summer flounder, provides a greater benefit to everyone. This past year, data from volunteer angler surveys were an important component in the calculation to reduce size limits for summer flounder in Virginia. However, Virginia data from Virginia anglers have not yet reached the level needed to stand alone. If the ability to reduce the size limit occurs in the future, the catch-and-release information on undersized summer flounder would be of great benefit.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions, and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal" and is found at www.vasaltwaterjournal.com.

Introducing the Virginia Fishing Line Recycling Program!

◆ Please help keep our waterways cleaner and safer for:

- Fish
- Birds
- Marine Mammals
- Boaters and swimmers

◆ Deposit used or tangled monofilament fishing line into specially marked containers!

◆ Contact the VMRC to sponsor additional bins your area



VMRC Managed Locations*

Buckroe Fishing Pier, Hampton
Capt. Bob's Marina, Chincoteague
Chris' Bait and Tackle, Cape Charles
Don's Bait and Tackle, Wachapreague
Lancaster County (multiple locations)
Long Bay Pointe Marina, Virginia Beach
Newport News (multiple locations)
Ocean View Fishing Pier, Norfolk
Wallace's Bait and Tackle, Hampton

*DGIF manages other locations throughout Virginia

The Virginia Fishing Line Recycling Program is run jointly by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries with support from the Boat US Foundation and the Virginia Aquarium.

If you have any questions about the program, or suggestions for new container locations, please contact Alicia Nelson at (757) 247-2244 or email alicia.nelson@mrc.virginia.gov.



National Saltwater Angler Registry



New Law In

2010

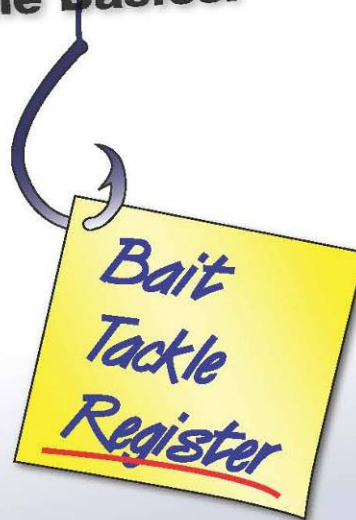
ATTENTION Virginia Saltwater Fishermen



**Before You Drop
Your Line in the
Water, Remember
the Basics:**

**Under a new Federal law,
most Virginia recreational
saltwater fisherman must
register with the National
Saltwater Angler Registry.**

Registration is an important tool that will help NOAA and anglers work together to conserve our oceans and preserve our nation's rich tradition of saltwater fishing. Registering is **quick, easy and FREE** in 2010.



To learn more or to register

www.countmyfish.noaa.gov

1-888-MRIP-411