

THE NORFOLK ANGLERS CLUB

WIRELINÉ

APRIL 2023

What's Inside

Guest Speaker: Wreck Fishing with Captain Brandon Cook, *Reel Fish'n Charters, LLC*.

Fishing Tips: Red & Black Drum Fishing with Al Bunnell

Fishing Reports;

- Freshwater/Nottoway River: Hickory Shad, American Shad, White Perch

Leadership Notes...

Fellow Norfolk Anglers,

Welcome to our new Norfolk Anglers Club members; Kyle Proffitt & Family, Matthew Wagner, Jonathan Kreher & Family, Dana Leinberger, Gordon Buchanan, and Brian Johnson & Family.

Spring is here and with the weather improving soon we'll all be out fishing. Remember to enjoy your time on the water safely and send your fishing reports to the Editor along with photos. We've also got club tournaments to consider too. So, check out the minimums necessary and send us your paperwork!

Will



On The Cover; Sea Tow Hampton Roads' *Sea Tow Guardian* departing Little Creek Inlet. Spring is a good time to take inventory of your vessel's safety equipment, operating condition and assess your Commercial Assistance Towing and trailer coverage.

Meeting

Guest Speaker: Captain Brandon Cook with Reel Fish'n Charters, LLC.



With as many wreck sites we have in the bay and off the coast this month's topic is wreck fishing. We're very happy to have Capt Brandon Cook joining us to discuss his tips and techniques for fishing structure.

Important:
April 17, 2023

**NAC Meeting at Boil Bay
Seafood City, Norfolk, VA**

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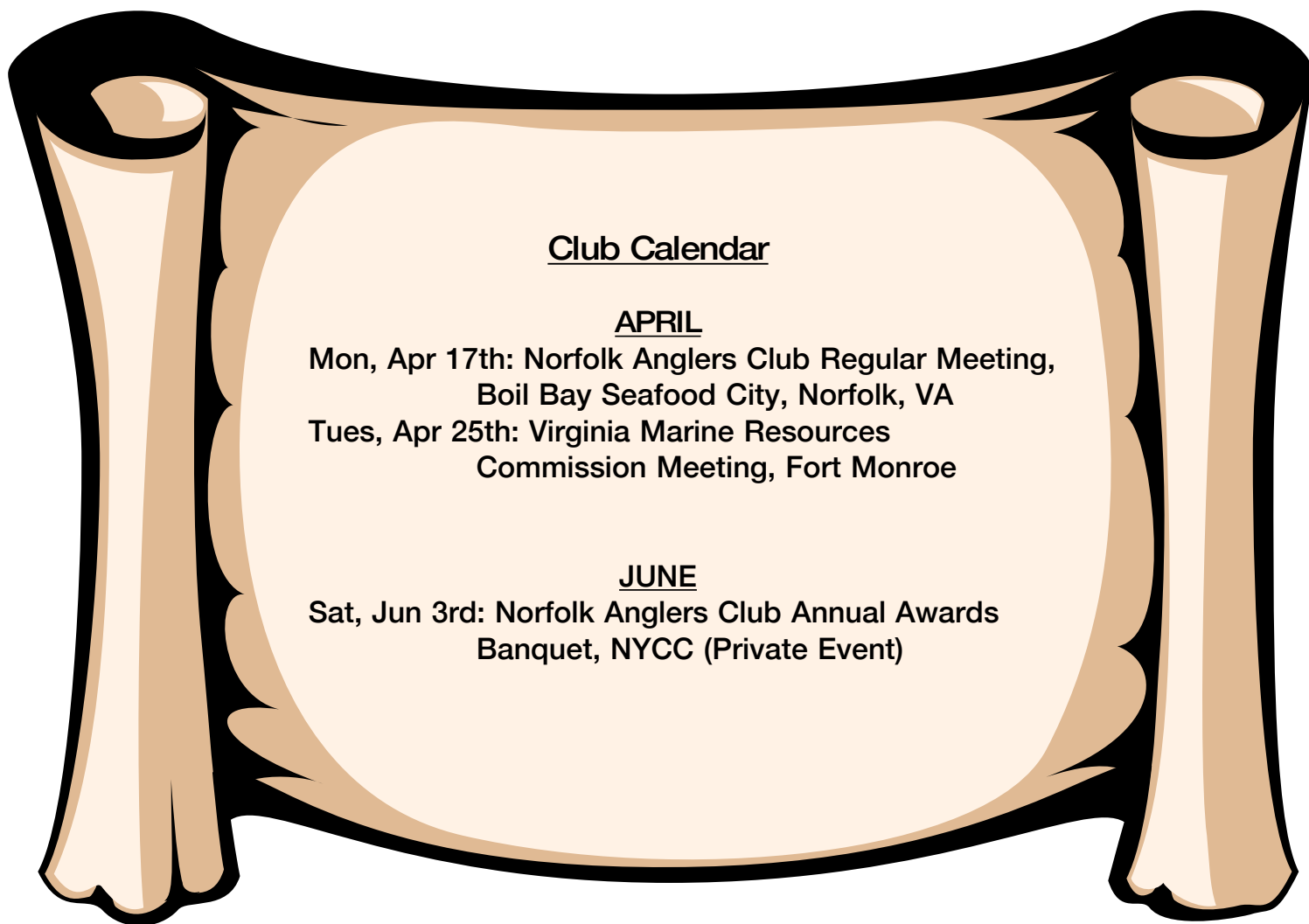
NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com

Norfolk Anglers Club

P.O. Box 8422

Norfolk, Virginia 23503-0422





Club Calendar

APRIL

Mon, Apr 17th: Norfolk Anglers Club Regular Meeting,
Boil Bay Seafood City, Norfolk, VA

Tues, Apr 25th: Virginia Marine Resources
Commission Meeting, Fort Monroe

JUNE

Sat, Jun 3rd: Norfolk Anglers Club Annual Awards
Banquet, NYCC (Private Event)

Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish Entries 1 January - 31 March 2023

<u>Freshwater</u>		<u>Saltwater</u>	
<u>Species</u>	<u>Name (#Entries)</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Name (#Entries)</u>
Crappie	James Eisenhower (12) Russell Willoughby (10)	Speckled Trout	James Eisenhower (2) Ned Smith (2) Bert Sainz (1)
Chain Pickerel	Russell Willoughby (2)		
Largemouth Bass	Russell Willoughby (1)		
White Perch	Marty Schriebl (1)		

For the 2023 Tournaments, ALL entries need to be submitted to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com

Documentation from Virginia or North Carolina Fisheries or Wildlife agencies, as well as, the Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish paperwork is acceptable.

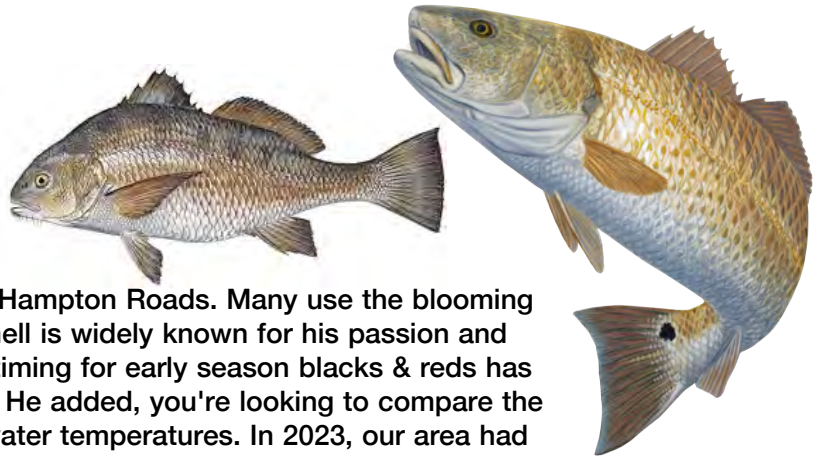
****Virginia Saltwater Tournament (Saltwater) or Department of Wildlife Resources (Freshwater) Citation paperwork or the Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish entry form must be submitted to James "Ike" Eisenhower via email to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com

Norfolk Anglers Club

www.norfolkanglersclub.com

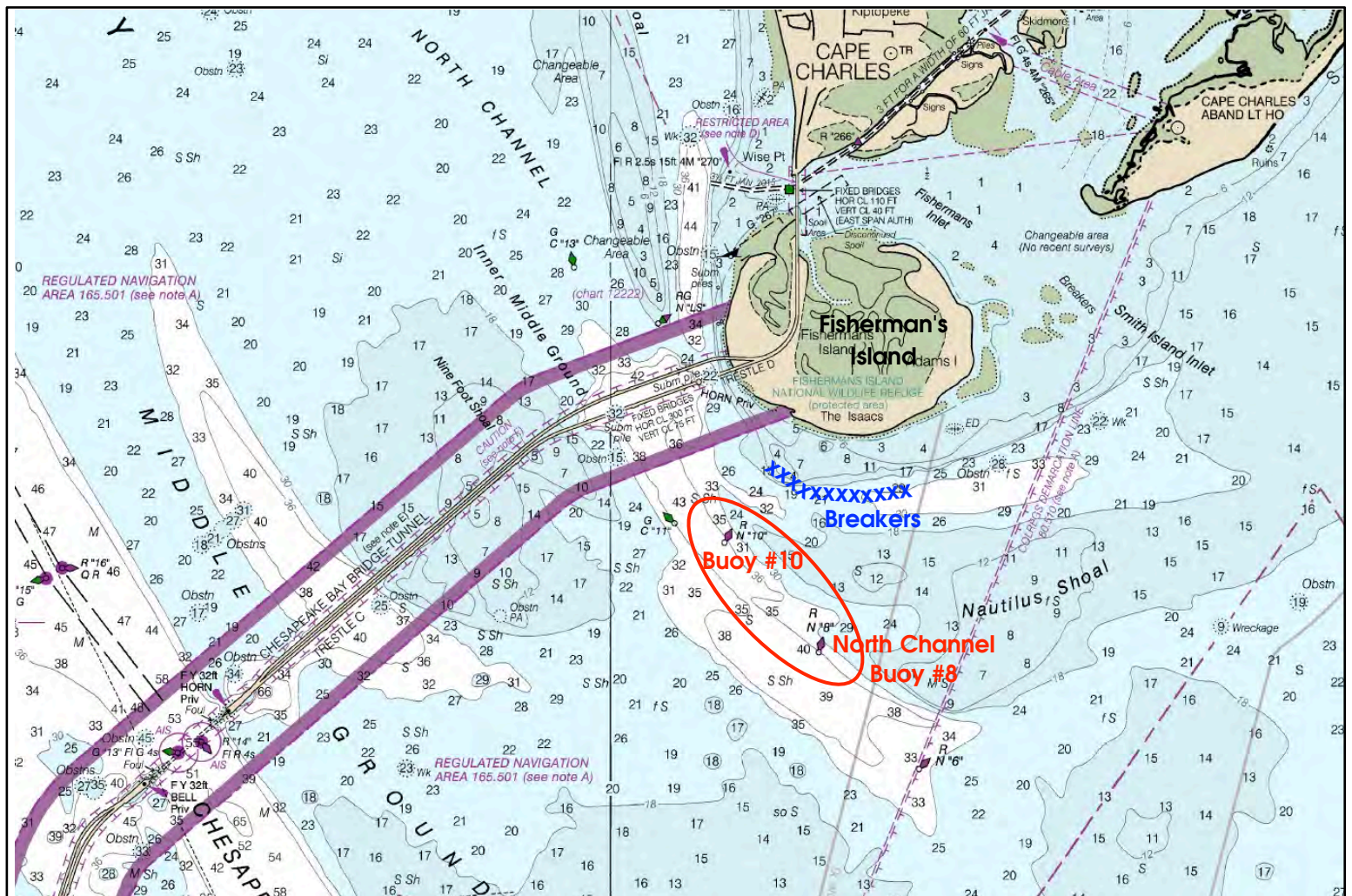
Fishing Tips...

Drum: Blacks and Reds with Al Bunnell



The early drum season is eagerly anticipated around Hampton Roads. Many use the blooming dogwood trees as the indicator of when to go. Al Bunnell is widely known for his passion and dedication fishing for black and red drum. He shared, timing for early season blacks & reds has a lot to do with the lunar cycle and water temperature. He added, you're looking to compare the timing of the full moon in April and May with warmer water temperatures. In 2023, our area had warmer temperatures in late winter and an early April full moon (April 6th). These conditions might bring a few drum to our area earlier but a better window would be the early May 5th full moon cycle with warmer spring temperatures raising the water temps.

Al prefers to fish the early season red drum off the southern end of Fisherman's Island along the North Channel. Some favorite spots are the channel edges and undersea lumps near the North Channel Buoys #8 & #10 (Circled on chart). Early season an incoming tide seems to work best, in the fall an outgoing tide. Anchor up near the edge of the channel so you can set out baits in the deeper water, along the channel edge, as well as up in the shallow areas. You'll find water depths depending on tide of 10-15' on the shallows and as deep as 35-40' in the channel.



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Fishing Tips...

You want to position your boat to cover all of these bottom conditions with rigs. Al recommends looking for any changes in the bottom contours and try fishing them. Drum will often concentrate around changes in contours, vertical and horizontal, looking to expend as little energy as possible while feeding on bait that also hangs around these contours.

Bait

For early season drum fishing there is no better bait than fresh peeler crabs. Peelers are those crabs that are beginning the molting cycle. Crabs will shed their hard outer shell (molt) and grow a new larger shell as may as two dozen times in a 3 year lifespan. An angler can identify a crab in the pre-molt stage by examining the shell and swimming fins. The crab's newer shell may be visible under the existing hard shell (photo right). As a blue crab outgrows its shell it will begin the molting cycle. Generally, it takes a few days for their new shell to harden. While the crabs are "Peelers" or SoftShell Crabs, they're quite defenseless without their outer armor and the drum know it! Another way to distinguish how soon a blue crab will molt is reading the swimming fin. As a crab gets closer to molting the inner edge of the swimming fin will darken from its normal color to a pink and then red. Once a pre-molt crab develops the darker red lining on the swimming fin it's less than two days from molting. After molting it'll take a few days for the new "soft shell" to harden.



Photo Courtesy of www.ourstate.com

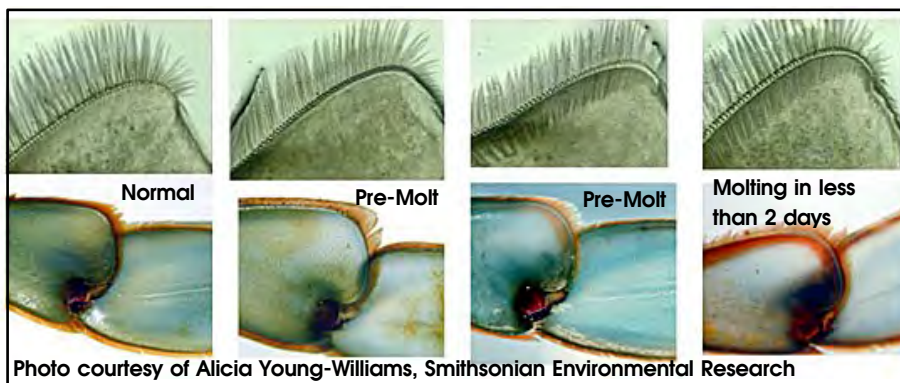
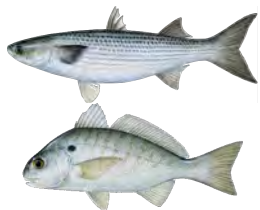
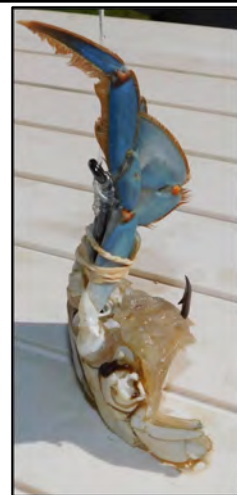


Photo courtesy of Alicia Young-Williams, Smithsonian Environmental Research

Hard shell blue crabs work great too! In Al's experience, the female crabs do better for drum bait. They can be rigged whole or halved/quartered. For whole crabs either rig a hook upwards through the top shell on the sides or upward through the rear of the shell. If you decide to quarter the crab first remove the top shell, quarter the crab, and insert the hook into a leg sicket and out through the meat. Then use a rubber band (photo right) to affix remaining legs to the hook and line. Rubber banding the legs up will keep the quartered crab from spinning.



Al Bunnell's second choice of bait behind blue crab is Mullet and #3 Spot. Live or cut fish are another great bait for drum fishing. For cut bait he prefers cutting the fish into chunks and fishes everything except the tail. He shared, fishing with the tail results in the bait spinning too much. Just cut up the fish into large chunks and don't forget to use the head, it's a great bait too.



Static and Dynamic Bait Sets

No matter which bait you select after positioning your boat on the edge of the channel or an interesting bottom contour you'll be setting baits out in areas where you don't want them to move around. The Frog Tongue sinker is an excellent sinker to keep baits where you put them. These are your static bait sets. There are other times that you might want your bait to be carried with the tidal action. For this type of dynamic bait set switch to an egg sinker. The egg sinker will not hold bottom like the frog tongue sinker but you still need to select an egg sinker weight that will not roll uncontrollably, which would hopelessly tangle your rig, but one that will allow the bait to move the sinker along. The action of the waves and tidal flow will move the bait and allow the rig to cover more area.



Frog Tongue Sinkers

Norfolk Anglers Club

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Fishing Tips...

Early Season Scouting and Safety

Al recommends before the season begins when early spring weather is mild and water clarity is still good around the shoals to explore them at low tide. Get to know where the cut throughs between shoal areas and how the winds and wave act over the shallow water. This is as much about safety during future trips as scouting the area for fishing spots. The shoals off the Eastern Shore can be treacherous to an unfamiliar boater with changing weather conditions. The shoals off Fisherman's Island, Old Plantation Creek (South of Cape Charles), and Hungars Creek (North of Cape Charles) are good locations to know (photos right).

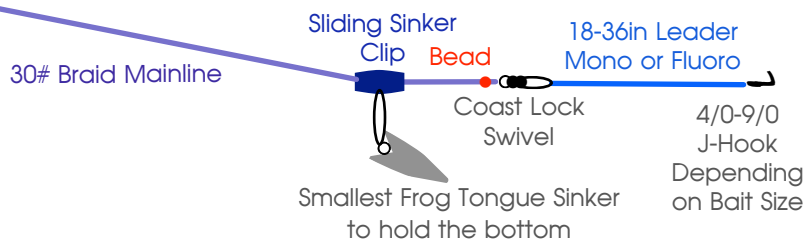
Rods & Rigging

Level wind conventional reels (specifically those with lever drags like the Daiwa Saltist LD40H) or bait-runner style spinning reels (Shimano Baitrunner) are great choices for drum fishing. Standard spinning reels (Shimano Stradic or Penn Spinfisher 5000 Series and Up) and conventional reels are all good choices can be used as well. While the bait is soaking, set the spool tension tight enough to keep line from coming off the reel. Fishing free-spooled rods in a rod holder is effective. But, you'll always do better detecting bites with the rod in your hand... especially when you're drum fishing, especially for black drum. The black drum bite is unbelievably soft and you're not going to feel it with the rod in the holder. He recommended checking your baits often because lots of things will eat your bait and fishing without bait is just no good!

The best mainline to feel a bite is braided fishing line and Al's choice is 30# braid with an 80# monofilament leader. While you can drop the mono leader weight down to 50# he doesn't feel it's necessary. *"I've never known big drum to be leader-shy"* he shared. He prefers to use a leader length long enough to be able to handle the fish at the boat grabbing the 80# mono instead of the skin slicing braid. Hook size should be matched to bait size, and Al explained, 4/0 and 5/0 hooks catch big drum just fine. He'll use 4/0 hooks up to as large as 9/0, they all work.

There's lots of debate about selecting circle hooks or J-hooks in fishing. Al Bunnell points out that circle hooks while effective at hooking the mouth of the fish need to be rigged to a fixed weight and not a fishfinder rig. A fixed weight circle hook rig with a short leader will find its hook-set before the fish can deeply swallow the bait & hook. Alternatively, fishfinder rigs incorporate a sinker slider that allows line to payout as the fish works the bait away from the sinker with little resistance. In the case of drum, the fish will crush the bait and either swallow it or spit it out so timing the hook-set is important with J-hooks. If you've found the fish is deeply hooked with either a circle or J-hook and is going to be released resist the temptation to continually work to get the hook out. Instead try and cut it off as close to the hook as possible and fully revive the fish before releasing it. The hook will rust away in time and quick release of a fully revived fish has the best chance for survival.

Red/Black Drum FishFinder Rig



Hungars Creek Shoal

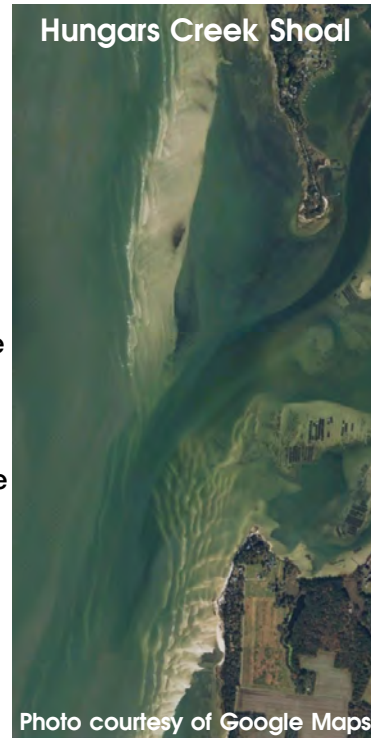


Photo courtesy of Google Maps

Old Plantation Creek Shoal

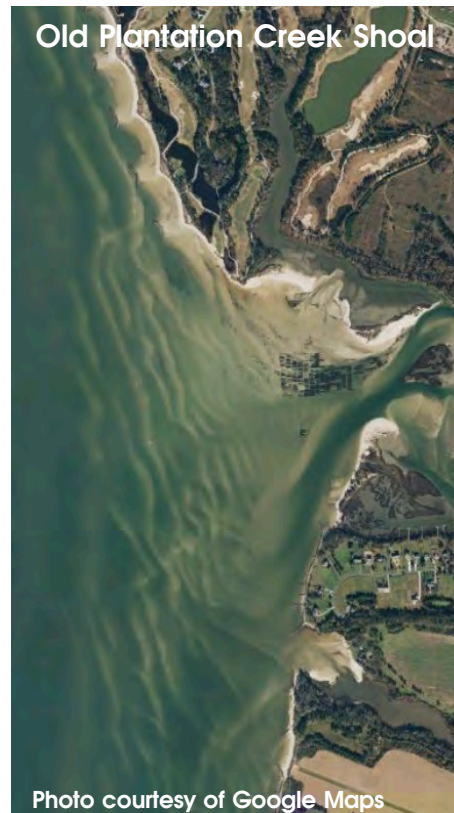


Photo courtesy of Google Maps

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Fishing Tips...

When anchored, frog tongue sinkers are great at holding your rig in place. Sometimes an angler may want to drift baits with the current to cover more ground. In this case, a Carolina Rig with a lighter Egg sinker will allow the bait to drift slowly, pushed by the current, without twisting the line as the sinker rolls and bounces along the bottom. Egg sinker rigged Drifting Rig works well. To minimize chaff or damage to the knot always incorporate a plastic bead between the sinker or sinker slider and the swivel. Al Bunnell uses a coast-lock swivel instead of a barrels swivel to make rig changes quickly. He explains that while drum fishing you're going to deal with cownose rays, at times they're going to be everywhere, they feed like drum, and you're going to hook them! Trying to reel in and then dehook a powerful fighting cownose ray is a lot of time *not* fishing for drum, Al explained. His method of dealing with them is to reel in as much line as you can and pull hard to break the leader off. The coast-lock swivel makes replacing the leader with pre-snelled hook fast and easy.

Red/Black Drum Drifting Rigs



Times to target Drum

Smaller sized red drum can be found all year in some of the bay tributaries like Lynnhaven and the Elizabeth River. If you're looking for the larger Red & Black Drum early season anglers have had success south along the oceanfront and Cape Henry in April while the fish are migrating toward the Chesapeake Bay. In the April/May timeframe with warmer water and the full moon look for them off Fisherman's Island and north toward Cape Charles. Later in the season as the fish move more to the south, try the shoals and channel edges north of Cape Charles in waters ranging from 20-35 feet. In mid-October you can find Al around the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel 3rd Island trying for drum while anchored. He prefers the oceanside of the island on an incoming tide. Don't forget to consider the lunar phase and tidal information to better your chances.

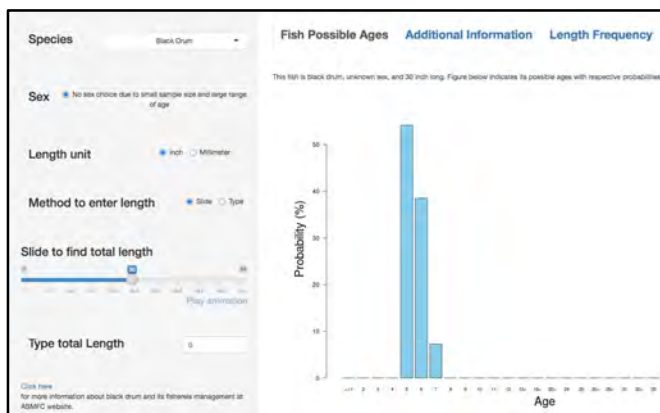
Other Resources

There's other resources available online in addition to weather, solar/lunar, and tidal apps. The Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program (VGFTP) gathers capture and release information from volunteer anglers on ten species. Each year the program releases their Annual Report detailing what species and how many were tagged in a location and the same information on recaptures. It's a good source to compare where these 180+ volunteer taggers are catching fish and of what size. The report is published by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC).

Want to know more about the age of the fish you caught? Another online resource is the Old Dominion University Ageing Lab located at the Virginia Marine Resource Commission offices at Fort Monroe. They publish an annual Finfish Ageing & Population Analysis report but also have online a *Fish Age Estimator*. It can be

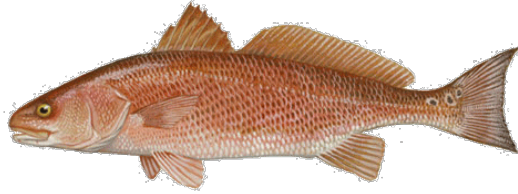


found by searching for "VMRC Fish Age Estimator" then scrolling down to find it. Just select your species and then use the sliding scale to match your length of fish and a bar graph depicting the age probably will be shown. The example to the right shows a 30" black drum is likely 5-6 years old.



Wonder about the age of a Citation 46" Red or Black Drum? A 46" Red Drum is 19+ years old and a 46" Black Drum is likely between 31-38 years old.

Club Members Tournament for 2023



Redfish "Spots" Tournament

Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023
- Must have the Norfolk Anglers Club decal in the photo with the fish on a measuring device* showing the total length of the fish. See NAC Prize Fish Contest Rules for measuring info. *Entries received with decal and no measurement can only be judged by number of spots. Photo entries without a decal or measurement tape are not accepted.
- Red Drum/Redfish up to 26 inches in length only and caught in Virginia and North Carolina waters
- Awards determined by 1st: number of Spots (on one side), 2nd: Largest Fish up to 26 inches, 3rd: Date of Catch
- Entries submitted on the Club Prize Fish Entry Form with photo (can be sent electronically to; NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com)
- No entry fee except the cost of the decal (\$1)
- \$50.00 Gift Card to the 1st Place Angler, \$25.00 Gift Card for the 2nd Place Angler.



Oyster Toadfish Tournament

Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023
- Awards determined by;
 - 1.Total Weight
 2. Date of catch
 3. Date of entry submission
- Additional Award for Best Oyster Toad Photo
- Entries submitted by email to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com in the form of a Fishing Report; who was fishing, stating total weight, with photo of the fish on the scale
- Weighing need not be on a certified scale and may be done by the angler, just try an avoid weighing fish on a pitching boat
- No entry fee (we would never charge a fee for catching Toads)
- Winners will be determined by our Tournament Director

"AJ" Perez, the Oyster Toadfish Tournament Director (OTTD)



Fishing Reports...

16 March: Mary, John Curry, and I had another beautiful day on the Nottoway River Shad Fishing. In about 2.5 hours we caught over two dozen of these scrappy fighters.



Both American and Hickory were caught, with all the American being released and a few Hickory kept for bait.

Spoons (silver or gold) with a Shad Dart (Red/White or Green/Yellow) on a dropper loop 16 inches above the spoon was the ticket. I don't know how much color really matters so long as it's bright.

- Henry and Mary Troutner



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28 FEB: Although early for Shad, the weather has been so nice. Mary and I thought we'd give it a try.



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SEA TOW

With a high of 70 degrees predicted we launched at the Hercules Ramp on the Nottoway River. We spent two hours fishing and landed over 30 American and Hickory Shad. All were released.

The Rigs consisted of a small spoon tied on the end and about 14 inches up a 4 inches dropper loop with a Shad Dart attached.

Both silver spoon with red/white darts and gold spoons with green/yellow darts caught their share of fish.

- Mary and Henry Troutner

27 March: Mary had a commitment, so with conflicting weather reports, recent NAC member Marty Schriebl joined me for a couple of hours of Shad fishing on the Nottoway River.

Once again, it was a great day with both the weather and fish cooperating. Although we didn't keep an exact count, we caught 30 or 40 fish; Hickory Shad, American Shad, and White Perch, with several doubles.

As a bonus, **Marty caught a 10 1/2 inch White Perch for his first Club Citation.** Rigs was a small spoon with a shad dart 18" up the leader. Color didn't matter; I used a gold spoon with yellow/green darts, and Marty used a silver spoon with pink/white darts.

- Henry Troutner



Marty Schriebl with his 10 1/2 inch White Perch for his first Club Citation.



Ready to Order a NAC Shirt?

At NAC's April 17, 2023 Meeting, it will be the last time to order shirts in person. Prices will vary due to the type of shirt and how many shirts are ordered. The more we order, the lower the price. We will have shirts for everyone. See the back page for the graphic design on the back. On the front will be the NAC Logo on the left side. Fishing Shirts with pockets will be embroidered. See each shirt to see who has ordered it.

5000 Gildan Heavy Cotton Short Sleeve Tee



The price for the short sleeve will range between \$12.00 - \$15.00 More for 2XL and 3XL.

Go to this link for more information:

<https://www.ssactivewear.com/p/gildan/5000>

5400 / Gildan Heavy Cotton Long Sleeve Tee



The price for the long sleeve Gilden will range between \$16.00 - \$21.00. More for 2XL and 3XL.

Go to this link for more information:

https://www.sanmar.com/p/1950_Black

Both Gildan shirts above do not have a pocket.

PC54P / Port & Company Core Cotton Pocket Tee, Short Sleeve



The price for the long sleeve will range between \$15.00 - \$20.00. More for 2XL and 3XL.

Orders:

- John Curry, 2XL, Royal
- George Langdon, 2XL, Charcoal
- Mike Burton, 2XL, Ash

Go to this link for more information:

https://www.sanmar.com/p/6459_JetBlack

PC61LSP / Port & Company Long Sleeve Pocket Tee

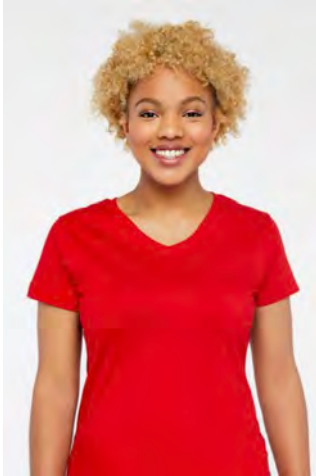


The price for the long sleeve will range between \$23.00 - \$19.00. More for 2XL and 3XL.

Go to this link for more information:

https://www.sanmar.com/p/1714_Navy

3587 / LAT Ladies Premium V-Neck Tee Short Sleeve



The price for the short sleeve will range between \$19.00 - \$23.00 More for 2XL and 3XL.

Go to this link for more information:

https://www.ssactivewear.com/p/lat_sportswear/3587

Paragon - Women's Long Islander Performance Long Sleeve T-Shirt - 214



The price for the long sleeve will range between \$20.00 - \$24.00 More for 2XL and 3XL.

UPF50+ sun protection

Go to this link for more information:

<https://www.ssactivewear.com/p/paragon/214>

Paragon - Long Islander Performance Long Sleeve T-Shirt - 210



The price for the long sleeve will range between \$20.00 - \$25.00

More for 2XL and 3XL.
UPF50+ sun protection

Orders:

- Andy Reid, XL Mint Green
- Andrew Anderson, M, Red
- Bert Sainz, 2XL, Sand
- Jonathan Kreher, L, Limeade
- Mike Rheinhardt, L, Aqua Blue

Go to this link for more information:

<https://www.ssactivewear.com/p/paragon/210>

[LAT](#) - Women's Long Sleeve Premium Cotton Jersey Tee - 3588



The price for the long sleeve will range between \$21.00 - \$25.00 More for 2XL and 3XL.

Go to this link for more information:

<https://www.alphabroder.com/product/3588/lat-ladies-premium-jersey-long-sleeve-t-shirt.html?color=01>

Paragon - Women's Vera V-Neck T-Shirt - 203



The price for the short sleeve will range between \$17.00 - \$22.00 More for 2XL and 3XL.

UPF50+ sun protection

Go to this link for more information:

<https://www.ssactivewear.com/p/paragon/203>

Paragon - Islander Performance T-Shirt - 200



The price for the short sleeve will range between \$20.00 - \$24.00

More for 2XL and 3XL.
UPF50+ sun protection

Order:

- Doug Schroeder, XL, Heather Gray

Go to this link for more information:

<https://www.ssactivewear.com/p/paragon/210>

18500 Gildan® - Heavy Blend™ Hooded Sweatshirt



The price for the long sleeve Gilden Hoodie will range between \$22.00 -\$26.00. More for 2XL and 3XL.

Orders:

- Bert Sainz, XL, Forest Green
- Jay Faszczewski, XL, Charcoal
- Jonathan Kreher, XL, Charcoal
- Nancy Little, M, Saphire

Go to this link for more information:

https://www.sanmar.com/p/115_HtSptRoyal

18600 Gildan® - Heavy Blend™ Full-Zip Hooded



The price for the long sleeve Gilden Hoodie will range between \$28.00 -\$32.00. More for 2XL and 3XL.

Order:

- Chirs Webb, 2XL, Royal
- Chris Webb, 2XL, Carolina Blue

Go to this link for more information:

https://www.sanmar.com/p/437_ForestGrn

LPC78ZH Port & Company® Ladies Core Fleece Full-Zip Hooded Sweatshirt



The price for the long sleeve Port & Company Hoodie will range between \$27.00 -\$31.00. More for 2XL and 3XL.

Orders:

- Camarva Faszczewski, L, Neon Pink
- Nancy Little, L, Neon Pink

Go to this link for more information:

https://www.sanmar.com/p/7051_AthlHthr

LST254 Sport-Tek® Ladies Pullover Hooded Sweatshirt



The price for the long sleeve Sport Tech Hoodie will range between \$35.00 -\$38.00. More for 2XL and 3XL.

Go to this link for more information:

https://www.sanmar.com/p/5511_TrueNavy

Columbia - PFG Tamiami™ II Short Sleeve Shirt - 128705



Order/ 3 Fish Designs

- Doug Schroeder, XL, Gulf Stream (Tuna, Sword, Sheepshead)

For each fish design, we have to order 6 shirts

The price for the short sleeve Columbia Fishing Shirt will cost \$61.68 *Add \$2 For 2X / \$3 For 3X

*Embroidered

Go to this link for more information:

<https://www.ssactivewear.com/p/columbia/128705>

Columbia - PFG Bahama™ II Long Sleeve Shirt - 101162



Order/ 3 Fish Designs

- George Grinnan, M, Cool Gray, Cobia
M, Gulf Stream, Red Drum
M, Sail, Speckled Trout

For each fish design, we have to order 6 shirts

The price for the long sleeve Columbia Fishing Shirt will cost \$75.14 *Add \$2 For 2X / \$3 For 3X

*Embroidered, Omni-Shade™ UPF 30 protection

Go to this link for more information:

<https://www.ssactivewear.com/p/columbia/101162>

Angler Interests

Virginia Marine Resources Commission Job Announcements



MRIP (Marine Recreational Information Program) Seasonal Data Field Technician

Duties and Responsibilities: The incumbent will conduct the field portion of the MRIP. This program includes the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey/APAIS and requires face-to-face interviews with marine recreational anglers. Field staff will travel to assigned sites to interview anglers about their fishing experiences, collect a variety of information, and weigh, measure, and identify fish by species name that the anglers have caught. Assigned sites can include beaches, piers, docks/jetties, and access points for private charter and head boats, including marinas, boat ramps and other points of entry to marine waters. Field staff is responsible for entering this data on a Samsung tablet while speaking with anglers at these sites. Paper forms may be used in the event that the tablet becomes non-functioning. There will be a 2-day training in the actual MRIP procedures including a Fish ID test and a Procedures Test. After becoming qualified to conduct the APAIS there will be on-site training to get the applicant comfortable conducting the survey.

Qualifications: Must be 21 years old. Must have a valid Virginia driver's license and access to a personal vehicle; personal vehicle use is reimbursed at 62.5 cents per mile, be willing to travel a reasonable distance to reach assigned sites; be available on weekends and weekdays, with additional availability during some evenings and nights. Individuals should be comfortable approaching and speaking with strangers; handling, measuring, and weighing fish; and working outside for extended periods of time in variable weather conditions. Must demonstrate communication and interpersonal skills, ability to work independently and follow prescribed procedures. Must be computer savvy in Word and Excel, and be able to copy, scan and send data from home.

Knowledge of fish species with experience in the area of recreational angling and familiarity of marine waterways in their local area is required.

Location and Hours: The seasonal data technicians may be required to work a minimum of three (3) 6 hour shifts a week although this is not a guarantee; must have flexible availability and be able to work any and all of the following shifts: 2am – 8am; 8am -2pm; 11am – 5pm; 2 pm-8 pm and 8pm – 2am; regular weekend work will be required and seasonal staff may be required to work up to 12 hours each weekend. The 2am-8am and 8pm-2 am are infrequent and always conducted with 2 Interviewers. Pay is computed at on-site time and administrative requirements such as timesheet and expense form submission. Starting Salary is \$16.50 p/h

Those interested may contact Jeff Allen at 757-325-8994 or email at; allenfoxhilllure@cox.net

Operation Paddle Smart: "If Found" Stickers



When the Coast guard or local emergency responders receive a report or discover a paddle craft adrift, there is no way to determine if the vessel was washed off of a beach during high tide or was separated from its owner during the course of a boating accident.

To combat this growing problem, the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary have launched Operation Paddle Smart. The cornerstone of Paddle Smart is providing owners of kayaks, canoes, standup paddleboards, and other unregistered watercraft a free "If Found" sticker for their boat to help reduce the number of unnecessary search and rescue cases.

The stickers are weatherproof, reflective, and provide room for the vessel owner's name and two phone numbers using a waterproof marker. The "If Found" sticker should be placed in a highly visible location inside the vessel's cockpit or near the operators station. The stickers are weatherproof, reflective, and provide room for the vessel owner's name and two phone numbers using a waterproof marker.



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