

THE NORFOLK ANGLERS CLUB

# WIRELINE

JUNE 2021

## What's Inside

Guest Speaker: Captain Tripp Seed, *Bay Foamer Charters*, Sight casting on Cobia

Fishing Tips; Penn Reels, new products and developments with Mark Lozier, *Oceans East Bait & Tackle*

### Fishing Reports;

- CBBT: Tautog, Sheepshead, Black Drum
- HRBT: Flounder, Red Drum
- VB Oceanfront: Spanish Mackerel, Bluefish, Cobia
- Little Creek: Speckled Trout, Red Drum
- Offshore: Black Sea Bass, Blueline & Golden Tilefish, Black Belly Rosefish
- Eastern Shore/Oyster: Flounder, Sharks
- James River: Striped Bass, Red Drum
- North Carolina/OBX: Roundhead, Red Drum, Mahi, Yellowfin Tuna, Sharks
- North Carolina/Chowan River: Blue Catfish, Channel Catfish

# Leadership Notes...

Fellow Norfolk Anglers,

The weather is improving, fish are showing up, and hopefully we've turned the corner on the pandemic. Before you head out be sure to give your boat a good lookover. Is everything in good working order? Have plenty of safety gear? Remember to check your signaling flares for expiration dates. How about extra oil, fuel filters, steering fluid? Most of all have a safe boating plan, check the weather and let someone know your floatplan before you go.



- Will

**On The Cover:** One of our youngest Norfolk Anglers, Lasalle Webb. Lasalle and his Dad, Chris, headed offshore on May 19th for Sea Bass and Tilefish. Read more about Lasalle's fishing trip in this month's Wireline.



## Meeting

**Guest Speaker:** Captain Tripp Seed with *Bay Roamer Charters*



*With Cobia season opening this month, it's a great time to get tips and techniques from one of our local Charter Captains fishing the Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Atlantic waters for Cobia.*

Join us on Zoom, Monday June 14th at 7:00pm.

To request a link to the meeting just email Wendy at [NorfolkAnglersClubEditor@gmail.com](mailto:NorfolkAnglersClubEditor@gmail.com). Provide your full name and email and she'll confirm and send a link a few hours before the meeting. She'll open the meeting about 30 minutes before the start time. There's nothing to download and no access code to enter.

## Publishers NOTES

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Norfolk Anglers Club

P.O. Box 8422

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## Important:

# June 14th NAC Meeting will be on Zoom!

### NORFOLK ANGLERS



[www.NorfolkAnglersClub.com](http://www.NorfolkAnglersClub.com)

# Club Calendar

## June

Wed, June 2nd, Crab Management Advisory  
Committee (Electronically)

Mon, June 14th, Club Meeting (On Zoom)

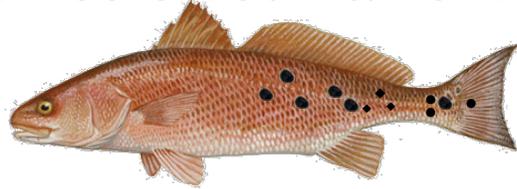
Mon, June 22nd, Virginia Marine Resource  
Commission Meeting (in person),  
380 Fenwick Rd, Ft Monroe, VA

## Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish Entries January 1, 2021 - May 31, 2021

<u>Freshwater</u>		<u>Saltwater</u>	
<u>Species</u>	<u>Name (#Entries)</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Name (#Entries)</u>
Crappie	James Eisenhower (2)	Red Drum	Kelly Hoggard (2)
		Tautog	Will Bransom (1)
		Blueline Tilefish	Greg Rogers (1) Mike Hubert (1)
		Shark	Greg Rogers (1)

\*\*\*\*Virginia Saltwater Tournament (Saltwater) or Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (Freshwater) Citation paperwork or the Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish entry form may be submitted to James "Ike" Eisenhower at the regular meetings or send via email to [NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com](mailto:NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com)

# Club Members Tournament for 2021

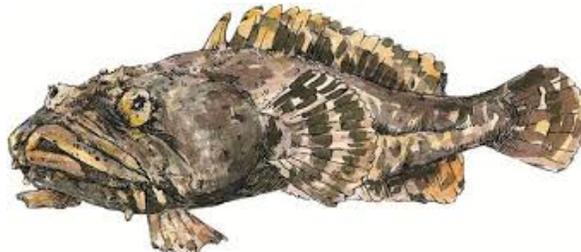


## Redfish "Spots" Tournament

### Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021
- 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.
- 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.

**Entries: Rusty Mitchell (1), William Ragulsky (1), Henry Troutner (2), Jerry Hughes (1)**



## Oyster Toadfish Tournament

### Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021
- Awards determined by Total Weight and then by date of catch
- 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
- Weighing need not be on a certified scale and may be done by the angler, just try to avoid weighing fish on a pitching boat
- No entry fee (we would never charge a fee for catching Toads)
- 1st Place, 2nd Place, and Best Photo Winners get a Non-Tipping Oyster Toad Can Cooler from Oyster Toad Outfitters
- Winners will be determined by our Tournament Director

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

**Entries: Alex Perez, Sr. (1), Will Bransom (1)**



### **OysterToads - Did you Know?**

✓ *Some of the ugliest and laziest fish known to inhabit the waters of the northeast accompanied John Glenn on his historic mission into space in 1998. Two oyster toadfish collected from the waters off Woods Hole, Massachusetts, participated in an experiment designed to help scientists better understand the effects that microgravity has on our vestibular, or balance, system.*



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## Penn Reels: New Developments and releases with Mark Lozier, *Oceans East Bait & Tackle*

Like many industries working through the pandemic, logistical backlogs and delays have become common place. Penn® reels is fortunate to be releasing a number of upgrades and new products in 2021. Mark Lozier, a Product Specialist with Oceans East Bait & Tackle shared, as with anything these days, if you see a product you need or want - buy it! He added, production interruptions and logistic delays are still possible so if you're considering a reel or rod/reel combination talk with your local tackle shop and buy it when you find it.



Penn® Battle® III (BTLIII1000)

For 2020/2021 there's been lots of new developments and product releases. New releases include the Penn® Battle® III with CNC Gear™ Technology similar to the Spinfisher® product line, and their HT-100™ carbon fiber drag system. They come with a full metal body for stability and support, a stainless steel sealed ball bearing system, line capacity marking rings on the inside face of the spool, handles that are right/left interchangeable and equipped with a Power Knob for leverage. With Penn® Battle® III sizes ranging from 1000 to 10000, there's a Battle III model to fit every angling challenge.

A new release is the Penn® Battle® III as a High Speed version. Note: for almost all Penn® Reels (except the Fierce Product Line) the red anodized finish indicates it's a High Speed reel (Photo Below). It's got all the same high quality features with a greater retrieve ratio.

What does the Gear Ratio mean to you!? The gear ratio represents the number of times the spool will turn in relation to the reel handle. A 6.2:1 ration means the spool will turn 6.2 times for every single 360 degree turn of the handle. Typical gear ratios are in the 5.2:1 to 6.2:1 range, while High Speed reels can exceed a 7.0:1 ratio. While that doesn't seem like much of a difference, it really is. If you've overcast on a cobia and need to quickly get the lure back into position or setup for another cast the Penn® High Speed reel can retrieve it quickly. Another design consideration most anglers won't notice, but will appreciate, is that Penn® balanced the gear ratios against the maximum drag the reel can provide. A high drag setting combined with a high gear ration and a big fish will quickly wear an angler out on the water. For larger spinning reels (+6000) and higher drag settings (25 lbs), Penn® aligned gear ratios to provide a maximum amount of drag and retrieve ratio.



Penn® Battle® III (BTLIII4000HS)

So, what's the bottom line on the new release of the Penn® Battle® III? Along with the usual high quality features, Penn stepped up their game with the all metal body. Not only does it support the reel better, it stabilizes the gears which lends to better action and longer life. Speaking of gears, switching to CNC produced gears over metal casting yields a very high quality gear. High quality gears gives you much a smoother mechanism.

The Penn® Spinfisher® VI is the workhorse of the spinning reel product line. Mark shared it's the #1 selling Cobia and Red Drum reel for good reason. It's a well designed reel with exceptional performance combined with a sealed housing makes it an ideal choice for casting on big fish. Penn's IPX5 sealing of the all metal housing keeps moisture, salt, and sand out of the internal mechanism. With sealed stainless steel bearings, sealed drag washers, and sealed housing the Spinfisher® can take a heavy amount of spray without worrying about saltwater getting inside the reel.

Penn® has four versions of the Spinfisher® VI; the tradition bail design, the Long-Cast, the Bail-Less design and the Live-Liner design. Each provide the angler with an incredible reel for unique fishing applications. The Long-Cast Spinfisher® VI is customize for surf anglers. It features a longer spool for additional line capacity needed for surf casting. The Bail-Less Spinfisher® VI is another reel suited for surf casting. As described, it lacks the traditional wire bail, which if accidentally closed during a cast would result in a lost rig. It casts just like a traditional bail equipped reel but then requires the angler to slip the line back onto the roller bearing and it rewinds exactly the same. The Live-Liner Spinfisher® VI incorporates a secondary 4-position drag system on the back of the reel. It's designed to manage tension while fishing live bait. Each of the four preset (and adjustable) drag settings are lever controlled. If additional drag is set when fishing live bait, the angler only needs to select one of the four lever positions. Once the reel handle is rotated the traditional drag kicks back in to fight the fish.

For anglers casting all day on a species like speckled trout or puppy drum, a light weight reel without compromising strength is important. The Clash™ II is the lightest spinning reel Penn® makes and with its all metal body, it has the strength. The metal body minimizes any flex while under a heavy load and keeps the gears in perfect alignment for smooth operation.

Penn® Spinfisher® VI 6500 (SSVI6500)



Penn® Clash™ II (B5000)

Common on many spinning reels is corrosion or failure of the roller bearing on the bail. Constantly saturated with saltwater over time many roller bearings develop problems. In developing the Clash™ II, Penn® incorporated a hydrophobic line roller bearing. The hydrophobic roller bearing material resists and repels water and therefore minimizes the chance of line roller bearing failure.

Penn® offers the Clash™ II in six reel sizes from 1000 to 5000 class and two additional models, 3000 and 4000 class, as high speed reels.



# Norfolk Anglers Club

[www.norfolkanglersclub.com](http://www.norfolkanglersclub.com)

## Fishing Tips...

A new product in the baitcast market is Penn's low profile Fathom® and Squall® series reels. Traditional low profile baitcasters designed for freshwater fishing lived a short lifespan in saltwater. Penn's reputation for high quality saltwater reels developed the Fathom® with many of their trademark features; HT-100 Drag Washer system, full metal body, and stainless steel bearings. The Fathom® comes in the 200, 300, and 400 reel sizes with standard right/left hand versions and high speed option in right hand only. Maximum drag of 24 lbs on the 200 & 400 series and 30 lbs on the 300. The new Fathom® also features a dual-action magnetic and centrifugal braking system for accurate casting.



Penn® Squall® (SQL400PHS)



Penn® Fathom® (FTH400LP)

The Squall® has many of the same high quality manufacturing features (full metal body, HT-100 drag system, machined brass gears, etc) of the Fathom® with only a few differences. It has only the magnetic casting brake and 24 lbs of drag on each of the 200, 300, and 400 series reels. Like all the newer Penn® reels the Squall® also has the line capacity rings marking the inside of the spool making it easy to note line remaining on the reel. It comes in a standard Gold and high speed Red (pictured left) models.



Penn® Battalion™ II Slow Pitch Jigging Rod

Photo courtesy of PennFishing.com

Another new Penn® product paired with the newer low profile Fathom® and Squall® reels is the Battalion™ II slow pitch rod. Slow Pitch Jigging is a relatively new technique to target fish when they're not interested in feeding. The difference between traditional jigging and slow pitch is how you present your bait. With traditional jigging you're imitating an injured and fleeing fish. For actively feeding fish this is an easy meal. However, when fish aren't actively feeding and conserving energy they lack interest in chasing down a fleeing baitfish. Whether actively feeding or during periods of inactivity is where slow pitch jigging technique is deadly. The Penn® slow pitch jigging setup provides for the small, precise jig movements to mimic a wounded fish that's trying and failing to swim away. Even for predators not actively feeding this presents too good of an opportunity and entices a strike.

The Battalion™ II is a 6'8" with a rolled composite core and outer layers of longitudinal glass to provide a lightweight, thin, and parabolic blank that flexes from grip to tip, distributing weight for extra durability. The Battalion™ II while lightweight, has great strength and lacks absolutely nothing in capability. The rod comes in spinning and casting configurations, with the casting model designed with spiral wrapped Fuji® Alconite guides and line ratings from 20 to 50 pounds. Another great feature is the "Versa Grip", an adjustable EVA foam handle for added comfort and control when fighting fish.



# Fishing Reports...

10 Apr: Left the house at 2:30 am without sleep to go to Hatteras. Was fishing shortly after 6:00 am before sunrise. Stopped in a good hole north of the point, but there was too much wave action. I only lingered there about 45 minutes before moving on. I got a good picture with the sunrise in the background.

Later, I moved a little further south to ramp 38. It's a lot deeper there. Found a dozen Roundhead in an hour with just a little bait and a single rod. Good fishing but most were small. I was able to keep 4 of them. After stopping at a friend's tackle shop, I headed back to the beach south of the point. Got into a good bite of Roundhead and puffers. It was steady most of the day. I videoed one child (about 8 years old) fighting a sand bar on a rig that he couldn't control the shark with. Eventually, the line broke. I pulled off both of my larger shark bites. One was a Sand Tiger and one was sand bar. I did manage a good group of fish for dinner and laid them out on the table for a picture the next day. It included a nice size spiny dog and a 1 lb. puffer full of roe. Got home about 1:00 am and went straight to bed and cleaned fish the following day.



22 Apr: Today was one of those days you dream of. I got into a little bit of everything and had a lot of fun fishing most of the day. Weather was rough and cold in the morning, so I decided to sleep in. Left Virginia Beach around 10:30 am for a 4:30 pm high tide. Got to the fishing hole south of the point around 2:00 pm and had lines in. Winds were west about 15 knots and swinging to the south.



Dozens of small Sandbar sharks tore up my lines and rigs throughout the day. I was able to reuse some rigs but had to manage with all the teeth. Caught about 10 Sandbar sharks on the shark rod, largest was maybe 40 inches. Caught a half dozen more on my Roundhead and puffer rigs. I got a big Sandbar early in the day on the beach and pulled the hook as I was running down to grab him. He got away, as I don't like chasing sharks beyond knee deep water. There were also a lot of big rays in the surf. I landed a big 60-70# cow nose that released and got a picture with one of the smaller ones. I got a good mix of Roundhead through the fishing session but struggled to find many keepers.

Around 6:00 pm, the wind turned unexpectedly due south (was supposed to stay south west). It kicked up to about 20 mph+ and a large school of menhaden a half mile long passed by. Immediately after, I got into the drum bite. I missed the first as I failed to get back to the rod in time while fighting other fish on other rods. The second and third bites were successfully caught. The first was a 48 inch and the second a girthy 50.25 inches that I would have loved to have the weight on. I hooked the larger only seconds after casting back in and if you watch this [Twitch video](#), you will see me cast out and stop a few steps later to set the drag and hook. The drum bite was one of those they sit all spring for at the point. Local



tackle shops estimated there were in the high hundreds of fish caught in just hours and the bite persisted on and off for a few days. Fished the beach until dark and headed in around 9:00 pm to register my citations before the tackle shops closed. Didn't get home in Virginia Beach until about 2:00 am as usual.

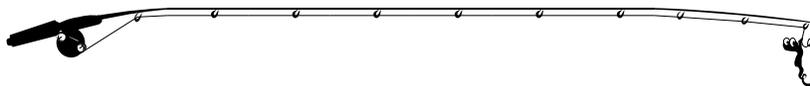


28 Apr: Got an early start with a 3:00 am wake up and headed back to Hatteras. High tide was at 9:00 am so the urgency to fish at sunrise was needed. Winds were pretty strong out of the south west, 15 knots in the morning and 20-25 knots by 11:00 am. I got set up a little after 6:30 am and was fighting both a big Roundhead and a shark within the first minute. The shark took some hard pulls and got 200+ yards of line on the initial runs. I was expecting a Sandbar and did not know it was anything else until I was ready to grab it in the wash. I saw the hammer as I pulled on him and got him to the beach for a confirmed landing. This is the first shark I've landed in the month of April that was big enough to tag (recently enrolled in the Cooperative Shark Tagging Program - NOAA/NMFS). It was a mature male, 61" to the fork and 80" total.



Hammerheads are a little troublesome to land both by boat and shore. They will instinctively fight with all their energy and some will fight so aggressively that they will sometimes fight to the death to avoid being caught. For a boat angler, they can use a boat to play the shark and tire it out. From land, it's all about the angler having the right equipment and using brute force to tire one of these guys out. Wearing out a shark and landing it quickly, then releasing it quickly is a key factor in the survivability of sharks in the surf. I took a little longer than I should have to release this shark. It is difficult to do all this by mislaid on the beach and sometimes being slow is a matter of safety. You will notice how aggressive the shark fights and swims throughout the landing process and including the release if you watch this [Twitch video](#).

I didn't catch nearly as many Roundheads on this day, but found a lot more quality with fish frequenting 13-14 inches. I found myself pretty tired as the wind was howling straight into my face. Fishing was tiresome and the bite died off as the beach began to get too rough around noon. I packed it in and was heading home at sunset after visiting a friend on the island for a few hours. I kept 18 Roundhead 12+ Inches and a pair of decent puffers.



1 May: Saturday mornings forecast included a gale warning for NW winds approaching 40 mph in the region. I got a late start not fishing the beach until 10:00 am. Winds were heavy, sand was blowing, but the beach I fished was calm. There was a lot of dirty water so it was difficult to find fish. In three hours of fishing, I found three total Roundhead. One nice northern kingfish represents the largest I've caught this year, view this [Twitch video](#). It was 14" and 14 oz. This fish was a premium catch as the empty stomach and lack of roe shows, it was all meat that gave this fish its heft. I also got a small puppy drum at about 24.5", view this [Twitch Video](#). It was a little on the skinny side and had an old bite wound that was nearly completely healed from a shark. The bite was about six inches wide across the lower back nearing the tail. The fish made a great selection for dinner and was immediately covered in ice.



After taking a break for lunch, my friend John and I decided to tag team a beach to the north. The winds at this point had subsided and switched to the East. We hit the beach a little before 5:00 pm and were doubled and sometimes tripled up on the same and multiple rods. I even threw four fish at a time into the cooler. The Roundhead were extremely thick and sizable, we kept over 130. There were 117 of which



were all Roundhead and most were 11-13". Even as dark approached after 8:00 pm, the bite got more intense instead of taking off. We were running out of bait and getting exhausted by the continuous bite. Not to mention we had to lug all our equipment off the beach plus 100 pounds of fresh fish. Included in some of the catches were a few 14-15" blues, spot, croakers and a lonely puffer. We packed three whole coolers that night with ice and fish to fillet them the next day. We ended the night by broiling some fresh puppy drum with some Cajun spices and putting a heaping of mashed potatoes and broccoli in the side. An epic day to remember.



This year, I decided to get into a little bit of videoing my fishing. I've chosen to use the platform Twitch to record and share my fishing LIVE. It's a platform similar to YouTube but it is all live-streamed and there's minimal editing of the content. Most of my streaming is simply to record all those crazy moments that happen when you're out fishing. This may just be temporary but I'm enjoying it for now. I've been using this to record all my fishing adventures so far this year. Whether it was the many days I caught hammerhead sharks, multiple red drum, or the epic Roundhead bite; it's all on video for anyone to enjoy. I try to go back and make highlights of the best moments from each day. You can check out highlight videos, past broadcasts, or my live stream in action by heading to [www.twitch.tv/fishnkelly](http://www.twitch.tv/fishnkelly).



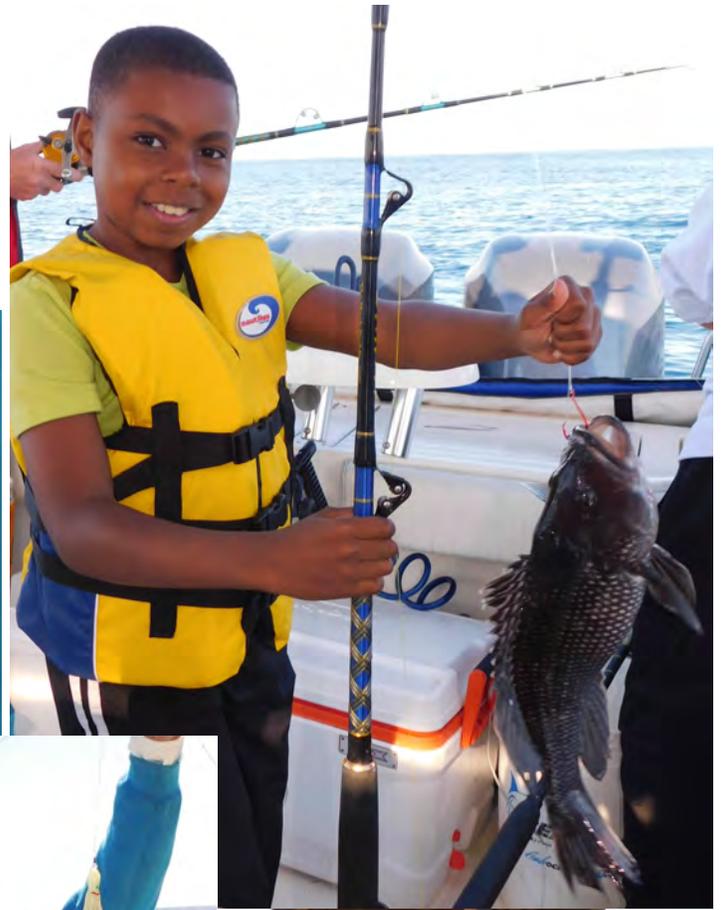
There's no cost associated with viewing my channel or the content I've created. - Kelly Hoggard

May 19: A perfect weather day for an offshore trip! We started off slow on the Ocean Venture with the Sea Bass, taking two dozen before moving off for tilefish. We quickly boated our 18 Blueline limit, including Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament Citations for Mike Hubert and Greg Rogers. Then on to Golden Tilefish and Black Belly Rosefish. The deep water of the Norfolk Canyon didn't disappoint. We landed nine nice Golden tilefish before dropping on a school of jumbo Black Belly Rosefish. We landed another two dozen nice quality BBRF and a few more tilefish. We had Mike, Greg, Jere Humphrey, and Chris Webb and his Son Lasalle. Lasalle started our day by landing the first Sea Bass and the first Blueline Tilefish. This young man can FISH! He helped out on the boat, cranked his reel for most of the day in the deep water until he discovered an electric reel.



We had Greg Rogers hook up with a shark while dropping for Golden Tiles. After about 30 minutes he was able to bring the shark alongside and to the leader for a VSWFT Release Citation. We had quite a few double hook ups with tilefish and rosefish fishing in the deep water. With the fish box and fish bag full we headed back to Owl Creek for an evening arrival.

- Will Bransom



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21 May: Mary, my daughter Kait, her friend Kevin and I fished the Shamrock at the James River Bridge for stripers. We hit the water about 5:00 pm and had our 4-man limit by 6:15 pm. They were 22", 24", 24" and 27".

All were caught on red/white stretches trolled along the pilings on the up current side.



18 May: Mary, John Curry and I made an early season flounder trip to Oyster, Virginia on the eastern shore. It was our first time there. There was a very good ramp for 3 boats with floating docks and plenty of parking. The water area is much larger and open then I assumed from the charts and previous experience fishing Wachapreague.



You need a chart or GPS, several markers/buoys were missing. Channel edges can go from 25' to inches in a boat length. Unfortunately, we had an incoming tide the whole trip, probably would have been better during an ebb. We fished the channel edges with various flounder rigs with squid/minnow, striper belly, shedder crab and jigs.

We caught 2 flounder, John -17 1/2" and Mary 13" throw back. I caught 2 sharks. I think Oyster has a lot of potential but the CBBT toll and traffic on the way home cuts into it.

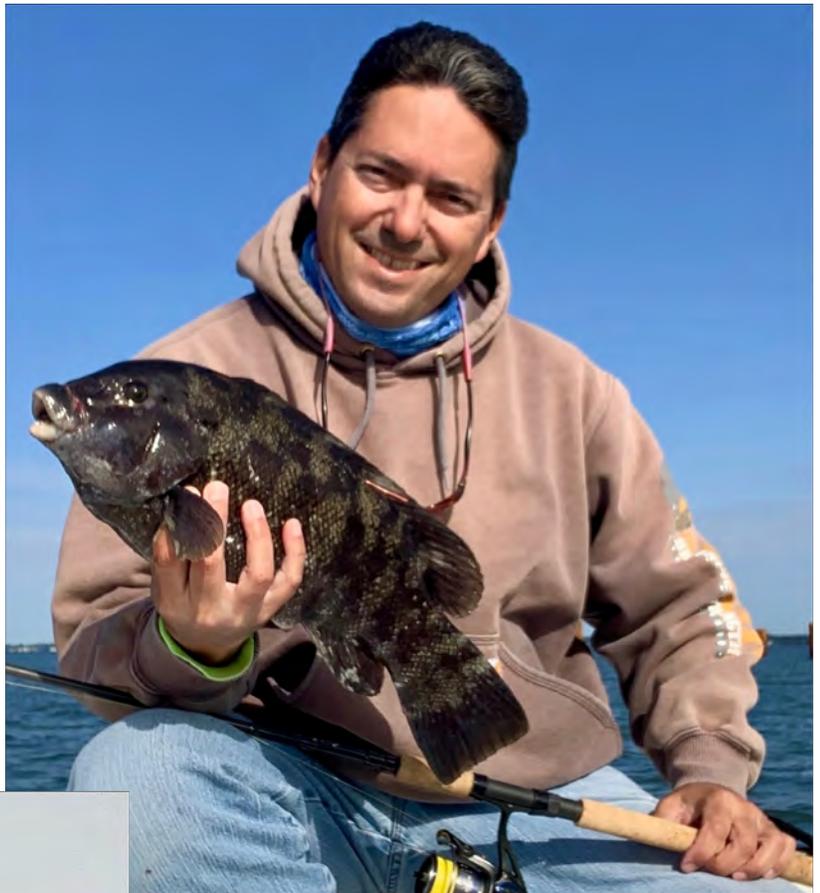
- Henry Troutner



9 May: I returned to Fort Wool, this time on the outgoing tide and once again using Gulp shrimp and frozen natural shrimp. I would cast a half of a shrimp, leave it in the rod holder while I worked another rod with an artificial. I continued to unintentionally snag Roundheads as I popped the lure off the bottom. There is no question that there is a noticeable increase of the number of Roundheads off HRBT this year, and I'm not complaining.

On the frozen shrimp, I caught two puppy Drum up to 24" and a surprising Tautog at 17". I also managed to snag two Cow Nose Rays. The action came fast and was over just as quick. Out of a three-hour trip, most of the action happened in 20 minutes.

- Alex Perez



Tagged and released puppy Drum.

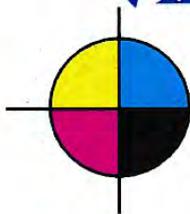
One of the few Roundheads that actually ate the lure.



Expecting Tautog, released with tag.

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27-29 May: George Owensby (old college buddy) and I fished the Chowan River and Albemarle Sound near Edenton, North Carolina for both blue and channel catfish for three half day trips catching over 40 fish, kept 38. We used nightcrawlers and shrimp on braided line 2 lb. diameter and 10 lb. test. The fish ranged from 2 lbs. to 7 lb. class. Water temperature 72 degrees.

The blue catfish for the first time ever are just starting to move down the Chowan River towards the Albemarle sound out of Virginia. This adds a whole new dimension for cat fishing there that we have not seen in the past.

Great fun on ultralight tackle. Will might soon have to trade our ultralight reels in for heavier fishing gear if the blues keep moving down the Chowan River into the Albemarle Sound. Wonderful fish fry at our fishing camp later in Edenton, North Carolina.

– Alan Holton



The Chowan River is a blackwater river formed with the merging of Virginia's Blackwater and Nottoway rivers near the stateline between Virginia and North Carolina.



Flowing for approximately 50 miles (80 km) before ending in the Albemarle Sound on North Carolina's coast, the river drains about 4,800 square miles (12,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of land in North Carolina and Virginia. Flowing through mostly swamp land with occasional high ground, the Chowan River grows to nearly two miles wide at its opening to the Albemarle Sound.

The river offers excellent fishing for catfish and largemouth bass. While tidal, the variation in tide heights in the Chowan River are normally less than one foot between high and low tide. The average depth is 16 feet and the maximum depth is 40 feet around Holiday Island.

Borrowed from Wikipedia:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chowan\\_River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chowan_River)

11 May: With a morning weather update looking good Mary, John Curry and I made a mid-day trip the 2nd island for tog before the season ends on May 15. We launched the Shamrock at Sunset Marina and fished the 2nd island. The weather was beautiful requiring a sweatshirt for the ride, but once anchored it was shirtsleeves. We fished for about 2 hours using shedder crabs and caught 5 tog (2 keepers) and a couple small toad fish.



16 May: Mary, John Curry and I got out for the opening day of striper season. We started at the Chuckatuck Bridge with a short, then ran out to the JRB. There in 20 minutes, we caught our 3-person limit; 21", 22" and 23".



All were caught trolling red/white stretch 20 parallel to the bridge on the up current side. We only fish for our limit, so while heading in, we stopped to try for some puppy drum. There we caught 2 perch and 1 short drum.

- Henry Troutner

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Capt. Mike Griffith  
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22 May: Mary, John Curry, George Langdon and I fished out of Lynnhaven in the Shamrock, hoping to catch some big red drum. Although we usually fish Nautilus Shoal at night, we headed out at 7:00 am. We fished to 11:00 am only catching 2 large cow nose rays. At least they gave us something to fight. Guess we better stick to night fishing for drum.



- Henry Troutner



28 May: An old partner from my law enforcement days in Pennsylvania asked me to join a family charter to OBX on a Friday.

We fished the West Wind from the Oregon Inlet Fleet, which was a very nice, clean and sea worthy 50+ foot Carolina Boat. The captain asked if we wanted to fish for Mahi or tuna and when we said tuna, he warned of few actually hitting the boat before the sharks got them.

He was right. About 10 minutes into the troll, 4 lines went down, all with decent tuna.

Before we got them to the boat the sharks had got them all. This happened with all of the 6 or 7 tuna we hooked. Fortunately, we did catch and land 4 very nice grader Mahi.

Weather was beautiful all day with a strong south wind picking up in the afternoon for our return trip. No problem for this boat!



7 May: I fished the end of the incoming tide at the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel (HRBT) using Gulp shrimp and frozen shrimp. Fishing off the rip rap of Fort Wool, I caught my first Flounder of the year at 17". My first Flounder always gets released in hopes of a good rest of the season. I followed that with a 17-inch puppy Drum, also on a Gulp shrimp with a 1/8-ounce jig head. Using half of a frozen natural shrimp, I caught another puppy drum at 23". There were about six Roundheads caught on Gulp that would attack the lure, then get snagged when I would jig the lure.

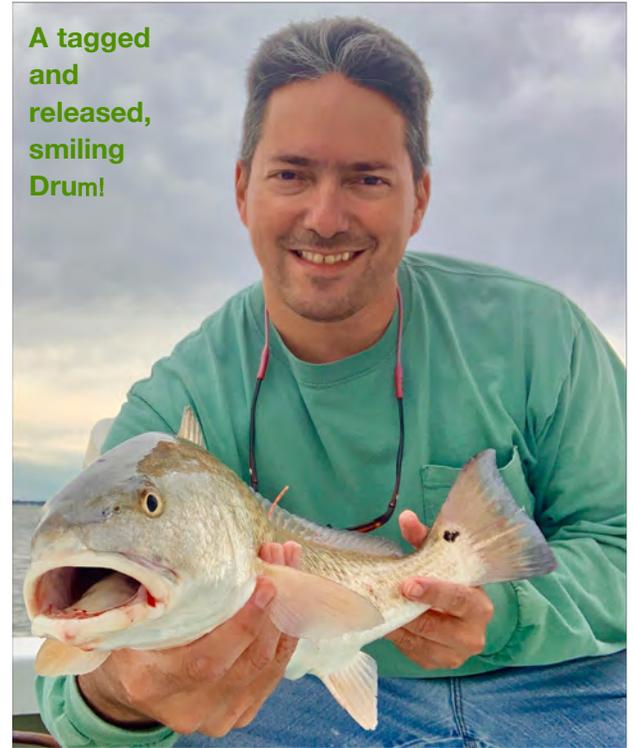


First Flounder of the season.

17 May: I took a solo trip out of Rudee Inlet looking for Spanish Mackerel and Bluefish. Fishing was slow for them and as soon as I had enough Sun and visibility, I climbed into the tower looking for Red Drum and possibly Cobia. About two miles North of Rudee inlet, I came across a large school of Red Drum.



My first Cobia of 2021, tagged and released.



A tagged and released, smiling Drum!



44" Red Drum

I made a cast into the school using a two-ounce bucktail jig, and immediately caught a 36" Red Drum. Once I tagged, revived, and released the Drum, I continued zig zagging down the beach and came across a pair of Cobia on their way to the Bay. Using the same

bucktail jig, I hooked and landed a 40.25" Cobia. With the open season for Cobia being almost a month away, I tagged and released the fish healthy. Finally, I came across the school of Drum once again catching a 44" Red.

15 May: Ted Crumb and Billy Ragulsky joined me to fish a wreck and the pilings of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT). We used live Blue Crabs to catch 15 Tautog which were tagged and released for the Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program. Three of Ted's Tautog were previously tagged and two of them were caught by yours truly a week before! Billy also caught his first 22" Sheepshead of the year along with a mid 20" Black Drum. I'm sure that was just the first of many Sheepshead Billy will catch throughout the Summer.

- Alex Perez



Billy doing what he does, catching Sheepshead.



27 May: Went fishing with Louis in the Little Creek on his skiff. This was the first time I'd fished since 3 days preop May 4th before my hip replacement. I'd fished several times with him from February till May with my hip fractured which was always painful but this time it wasn't hurting near as much as before. Just muscle pain that I have been used more in the rehab work with my physical therapist.

We fished the jetties in Little Creek looking most of all for puppy drum which Louis got quickly but it was a short. I followed with an 18-inch speckled trout on a white Gulp shrimp which guaranteed he and Hai had dinner.

Beautiful day weather wise with blue skies and little NE winds. Now I'm ready for some more fishing without pain. We fished at high tide then as it started out.

- Dr. James W. Ike Eisenhower



Billy and his Black Drum.

End of May Update: Pompano and Spanish are moving up. The pompano are still south of the point in Hatteras but some large fish between 3-4+ pounds have been weighed. Spanish and blues are beginning to come north and are scattered along the beaches up to Cape Henry. Large fish will dominate the early bite as they will be able to withstand the cold water if it gets churned up. Spanish will remain scattered until the silversides are bigger and begin to school up. The drum run has moved north and most fish are in Virginia. While the roundhead bite has been good in North Carolina, the majority of fish have pushed into the Chesapeake Bay for the spawning season. Roundhead are scattered everywhere but small croakers and sand perch are dominating the beaches with sand fleas. Sharks are going to be located where fish are getting concussed by rougher surf or waves and are looking for easy prey to feed on.

7 May: Went down to Hatteras in the hopes of getting a good shark bite. The surf line was cut up and shallow water pushed all predators off the beach. This was the worse condition I had ever seen on this particular beach in Hatteras. Three years ago, 30 feet of water was within casting distance. Today, 6 feet of water was 200 yards off the beach. Hopefully it begins to cycle back but beach conditions have certainly been declining south of the point in the last two years. I was able to get into a couple schools of roundhead. I kept 12 fish around 11-13 inches including my first gulf kingfish of the year. I'm looking forward to seeing more of them this summer. They were very big in Virginia last year along the Sandbridge beach. At the end of the day, I had a Wildlife Resource officer check my license and fish. This was the first time I've ever been checked for either in North Carolina. It's just a reminder that no matter where you are, be sure to keep your license up to date. Even when fishing by yourself in the middle of thunderstorms.



23 May: Headed back to Hatteras on a Sunday. This time I had Patty with me to try and get her on a shark. I am still trying to get into the spring shark bite but had yet to catch a blacktip until today. It was on the smaller end and only measured about 45" long. To keep a blacktip, it has to be 54" to the fork. I'm looking forward to some blacktip steaks when I can finally get one that size. The bite was slow otherwise. Lots of small croakers and pinfish in the surf line and a couple of stingrays playing with the shark baits. We



got one larger southern stingray that weighed about 100 pounds. Patty fought it for a while but the stingray was really stubborn and wanted to latch down to the bottom. Sometimes on a south wind the beach can be dirty or clean. On this day, the clean water was pushing about 80 yards of the beach. I began casting as the clean water pushed in. The birds working the color line indicated bait nearby. After around 30 to 40 casts, I got my first bite. I started working the zone a bit faster and hooked up! I was rewarded with a big 23" Spanish! I only hooked 2 out of 10 bites and landed

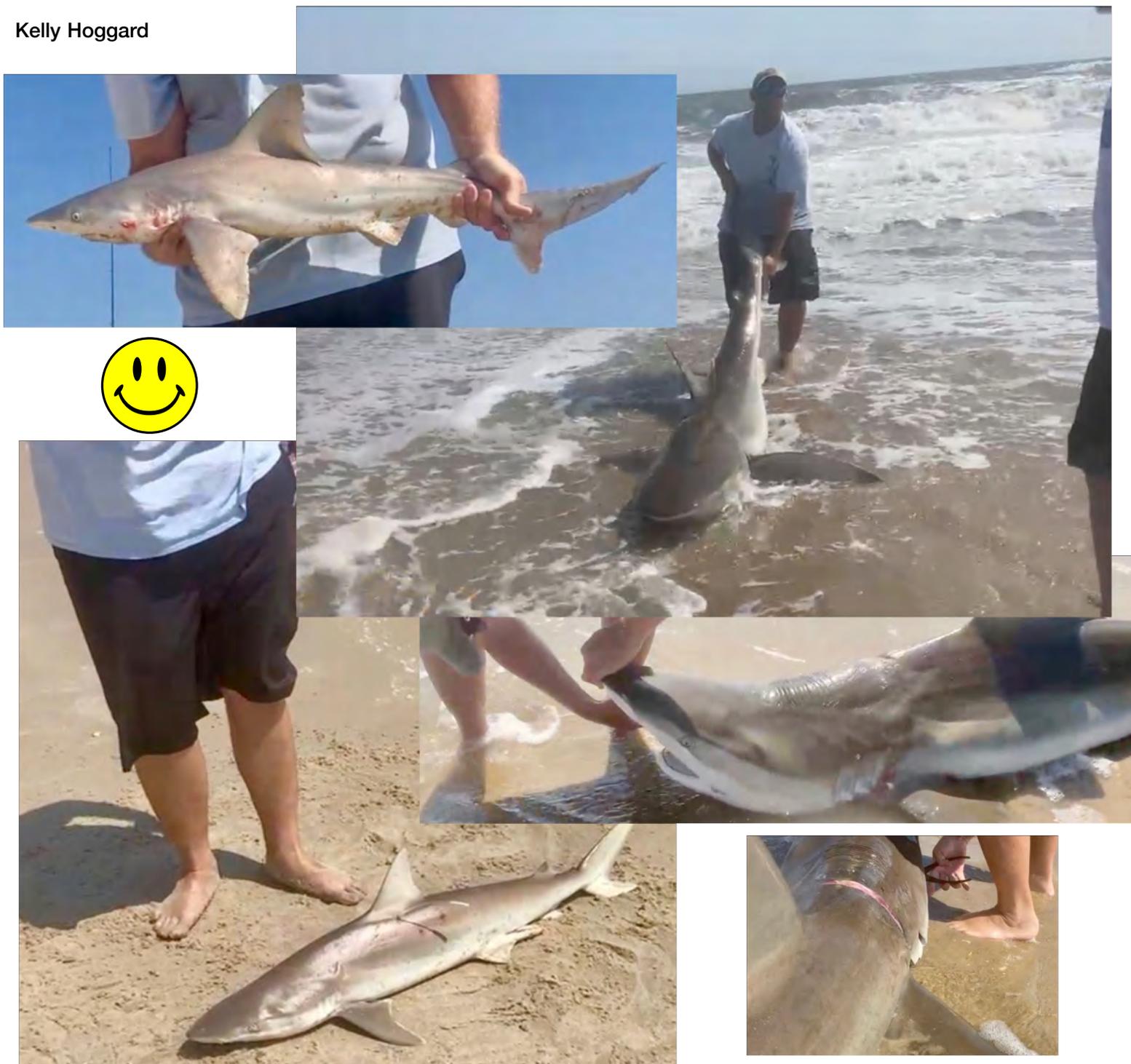
1 of the two hookups. It was a new personal best. We had enough roundhead and Spanish to eat dinner that evening.



28 May: With the warm water and calm winds forecasted in the morning, I made plans to head down and hit the Spanish bite at sunrise. Unfortunately, life had other plans so I made an early afternoon trip to the fishing grounds in Hatteras. A southwest wind of 20+ knots was already howling. I made the best attempt I could at shark and roundhead fishing, but the grass was getting the best of me. Dirty water stretched out hundreds of yards but the low tide allowed me to get closer to the trough and find some sharks. I went 3/6 on shark runs for the day and caught a few of the smaller croaker bites.

I managed two Dusky sharks and one small Sandbar. The larger of the two Dusky sharks measured out to 113 inches! It was a new personal best shark for me and I was excited to catch the shark. The shark though was a little less fortunate. The shark had a plastic cardboard box strap wrapped around his neck and was cutting both his collar and gills badly. I was able to get the shark freed of the trash, tagged, and released successfully back to the ocean. I am hoping the shark can be caught again and pictures be available to see how the shark has healed. I caught one smaller Dusky earlier in the day that measured out to 48" and a smaller 30-36" Sandbar. I had a great time fishing though the sun, heat, wind and waves can really wear you out in a short time. I am looking forward to heading down on a nice day and getting into the summer Spanish bite!

Kelly Hoggard



# Angler Interests

## June Openings/Closures; Recreational Fishing



Black Sea Bass; CLOSED June 1-15th, REOPENS June 16th. Virginia Water and Federal Waters possession limits remains the same at 15 fish minimum size 12.5". Be sure to check Federal regulations before fishing in the EEZ (3-200nm).



Tautog; CLOSED May 16 - June 30th, REOPENS July 1st.



Bluefish; OPEN, no closed season. Possession limits vary; 3 per person from shore or a rented or private vessel; 5 per person on for-hire or charter vessels.



Cobia; OPENS June 15th until Sept 15th. Possession Limit - 1 per person, 2 per vessel; whichever is more restrictive. Minimum Size - 40" total length with one allowed on a vessel >50" total length. Gaffing is prohibited. Remember to get your Free/Online VMRC Permit and complete the required reporting.

## Operation Paddle Smart: "If Found" Stickers available



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. In these situations, the Coast Guard has to assume the owner is in trouble and needs assistance until it can find evidence to support otherwise. As a result the Coast Guard and local harbor masters spend hundreds of thousands of tax dollars per year searching for potential people in distress when there was no one in danger to begin with.

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.

The Norfolk Anglers Club was provided some of these "If Found" stickers by the USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 5-9 from Smithfield, VA. If you would like to have one just send us an email with your name & address to [NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com](mailto:NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com). We'll send it to you free!



