

A woman wearing a blue baseball cap with a logo, a white hoodie, dark pants, and white boots is standing on a wooden dock. She is smiling and holding a large speckled trout with both hands. The dock extends into a calm lake, and the surrounding area is covered with fallen leaves. In the background, there are trees and a road.

THE NORFOLK ANGLERS CLUB

WIRELINE

MARCH 2024

What's Inside

Guest Speaker: Speckled Trout Fishing with Stan Simmerman

Fishing Tips: Sword fishing and Deep Drop Fishing with Captain Eric Meyers, *Heads-n-Tails Charters*

Fishing Reports;

- Rudee Inlet: Puppy Drum
- Nottoway River/Freshwater: Hickory Shad
- Lake Smith/Freshwater: Black Crappie, Chain Pickerel
- Smith Mountain Lake/Freshwater: Striped Bass
- North Carolina/Freshwater: Black Crappie, Largemouth Bass, Chain Pickerel

Leadership Notes...

Fellow Norfolk Anglers,

Many THANKS to our Mid-Atlantic Sports & Boat Show volunteers! We had a great showing because of you, made new friends, and shared what our club is all about. Our next event is the Fishing Flea market on Saturday March 2nd. Please stop by and say hello if you visit the flea market.

Our Annual Awards Banquet is here! This is a private event for Norfolk Anglers Club members and their invited guests. The Norfolk Yacht and Country Club is hosting the event again this year on March 9th and we have a wonderful evening planned.

Will

On The Cover: Jennifer Humphrey in Halifax, NC on a February 9th fishing trip with her husband Jere.



Meeting

Guest Speaker: Speckled Trout fishing with Stan Simmerman

Stan is an avid angler and volunteer tagger with the Virginia Game Fish Tagging program. Whether it's fishing up on the peninsula or down in the Elizabeth River you can usually find Stan reeling in big speckled trout. Join us on Monday, March 18th, and learn some of Stan's techniques targeting speckled trout.



Important:

March 18, 2024

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

March

Sat, Mar 2nd: Fishing Flea Market, Virginia Beach Field House,
2020 Landstown Centre Way, Virginia Beach

Sat, Mar 9th: Poquoson Kiwanis Fishing Flea Market and
Nautical Art Show, Poquoson High School
8:00am-1:00pm

Sat, Mar 9th: Norfolk Anglers Club Awards Banquet

Fri, Mar 15th: Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program Awards
Bass Pro Shops Hampton 6:30pm

Mon, Mar 18th: Norfolk Anglers Club Regular Meeting,
Boil Bay Seafood City, Norfolk

Tues, Mar 26th: Virginia Marine Resources Commission
meeting, 380 Fenwick Rd, Ft Monroe, VA

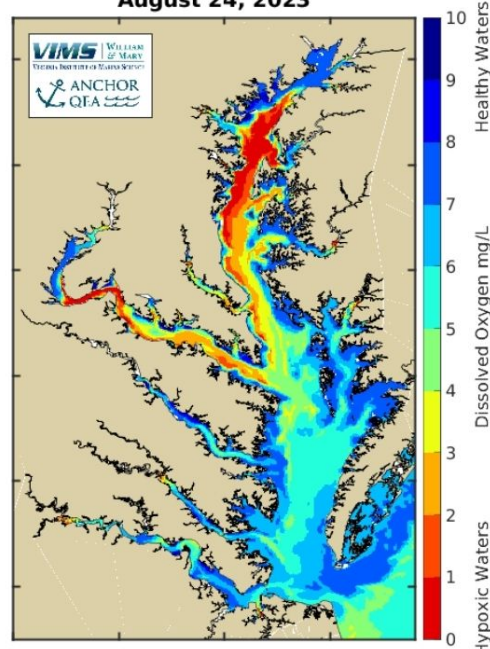
TBD, Mar: VMRC Finfish Management Advisory Committee
FMAC (OnLine)

Sat Mar 30th: Virginia Charter Boat Workshop, VIMS
Gloucester Point, 8:15 am - 12:15 pm

Chesapeake Bay Environmental Forecast System

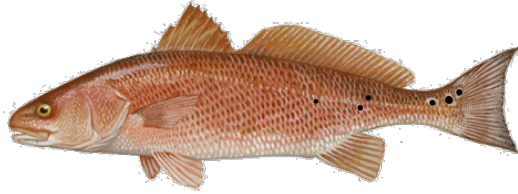
Use our forecasts and real-time "nowcasts" of temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, harmful algal blooms, waves and other environmental factors within the Chesapeake Bay to help plan your fishing! Based on observations and computer models developed by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and partners, these tools accurately predict the current status of important environmental variables and how they are likely to change in the short-term. Check out this free resource to have a more productive day on the water!

Bottom Oxygen: Nowcast
August 24, 2023



<https://www.vims.edu/cbefs/>

Club Members Tournament for 2024



Redfish "Spots" Tournament

Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024
- 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.



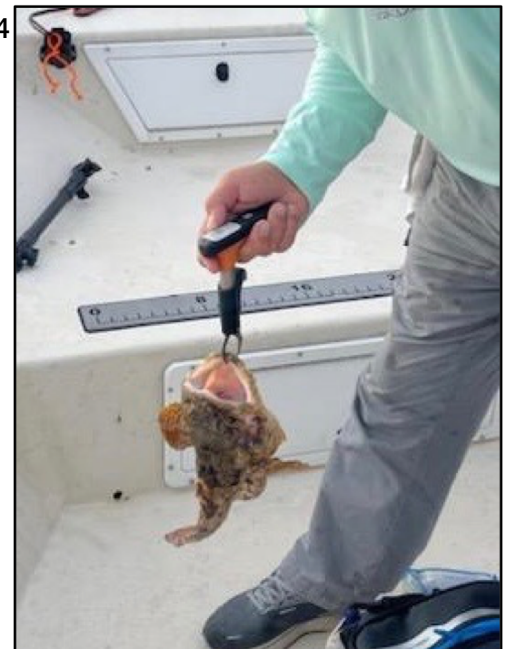
Oyster Toadfish Tournament

Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024
- 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

Capitán Alez Perez, Sr.

"Temporary" Oyster Toadfish Tournament Director (TOTTD)



Save the Date!



Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program Awards

Bass Pro Shops Hampton
March 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Come discover our next Top Tagger!

417,000 TAGS AND COUNTING!

Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish Entries 1 January - 29 February 2024

Freshwater		Saltwater	
Species	Name (#Entries)	Species	Name (#Entries)

**For the 2024 Tournaments, ALL entries
need to be submitted to
NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com**

****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

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

Norfolk Anglers Club

www.norfolkanglersclub.com

Fishing Tips...

Sword Fishing and Deep Drop Fishing

Captain Eric Meyers, Head~N~Tails Fishing Charters



Head~N~Tails

Head~N~Tails Fishing Charters

Captain Eric Meyers operates a Contender twin engine center console boat out of Lynnhaven Inlet capable of reaching nearshore, inshore, and offshore fishing locations off the Virginia coast. Trips to the deepest waters off Virginia can yield swordfish, large groupers, golden tilefish, blueline tilefish and jumbo sized black sea bass. Trips can be customized to combine sword fishing and deep dropping for multiple species.



A typical summertime trip offshore includes initially setting up for swordfish around sunrise. Swordfish during the night will typically be found higher in the water column and descend to deeper water during the day. Captain Meyers will set two and sometimes three (when conditions are right) swordfish rigs in 1,000-1,200 feet of water. These are rigs dropped with heavy 12 lbs sinkers with 100ft wind-on leaders. The heavy sinkers are attached to the leader with a long line clip. These are quick release clips attached to a wax loop tied on the line. The long leader is attached to the mainline by joining two loops together so they slide easily through the rod guides. Captain Meyers uses a bright color hollow dacron to form a loop for the mainline to attach to and a hollow splice for the 300# leader. The bright color alerts when the leader reaches the rod tip and to be ready to remove the weight. He attaches three flashing on the leader spaced about every 15ft from the ball bearing swivel and secures them with rubber bands so they can easily be pulled loose. Attached to the swivel is a short 2-3ft leader between 300-500# mono to the lure. The lure can be an artificial Hogy Eel Lure, dead Eel, or a large squid.



Wax Loop w/ Long Line Clip

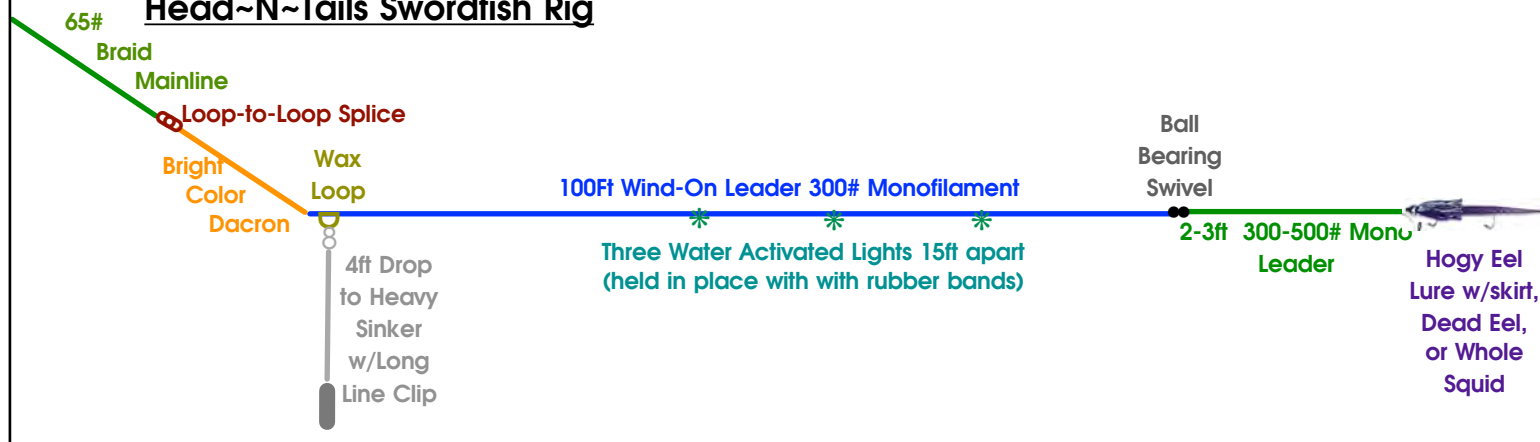


Lights w/rubber band



Hogy Eel Lures

Head~N~Tails Swordfish Rig



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Fishing Tips...

Rigging and deploying Swordfish rigs

Captain Eric Meyers uses both dead eels and large squid for swordfish. He stresses to freeze the eels for a number of days before rigging to ensure they're dead. Live eels will only tangle up your rig and aren't needed. For eels, he'll insert an 11/0 Mustad J-hook in the mouth and out the belly of the eel and sew the hook eye to the eel. He adds a skirt to finish the rig on the 2-3ft 300# leader. For rigging squid, he prefers getting the large whole squid, then brining them for 3-4 hours before rigging. He'll use one or two Mustad 10/0 Southern Tuna Hooks and sew them into the squid mantle.

Another technique Heads~N~Tails uses is to floss a wax loop on the braided mainline at 850 and a second at 1,100 feet. For the water depth he fishes these are the perfect points to attach a surface buoy. Floating a second or third daytime swordfish rig out on a buoy without tangling lines requires lots of experience and is not recommended for those starting out. The swordfish rig needs to be carefully deployed while moving forward to keep the 100ft leader from tangling with the mainline. Once at the target depth a 1.5 to 3.0 knot drift speed is desired. Captain Meyers recommends a strong but sensitive rod as the swordfish bite is soft and they can be a very powerful fish, especially near the boat.



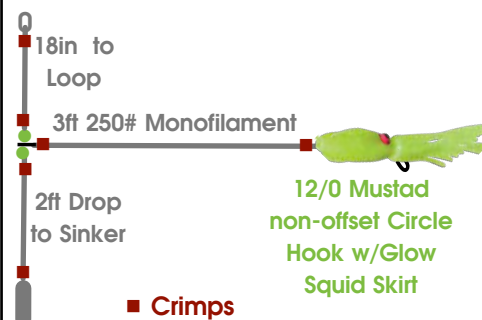
Deep Drop Fishing

Bottom fishing the deep can yield an amazing selection of big fish. Warsaw and Snowy grouper are the largest species other than sharks to be found in the deep. Golden tilefish is another that can often top 40 pounds. There's also blueline tilefish and black sea bass.

Heads~N~Tails uses single, double, and multiple drop rigs to target these species. In the deeper 900ft depth range they'll target the larger grouper with a single drop

rig made up with 250# monofilament line. Captain Meyers crimps all the connections for this rig and uses a heavy swivel sandwiched between two glow beads as the attachment for the mono leader. He prefers the Mustad 12/0 non-offset circle hook with a glow squid skirt and a chafe sleeve.

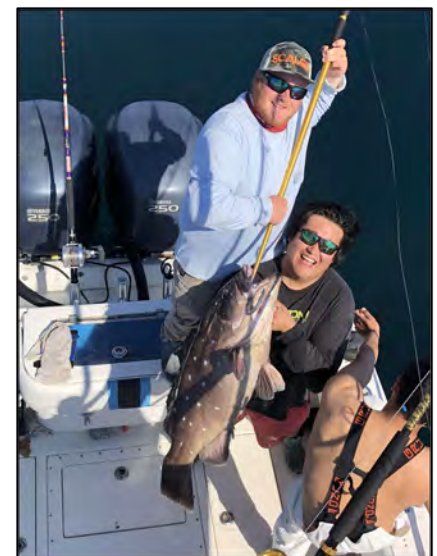
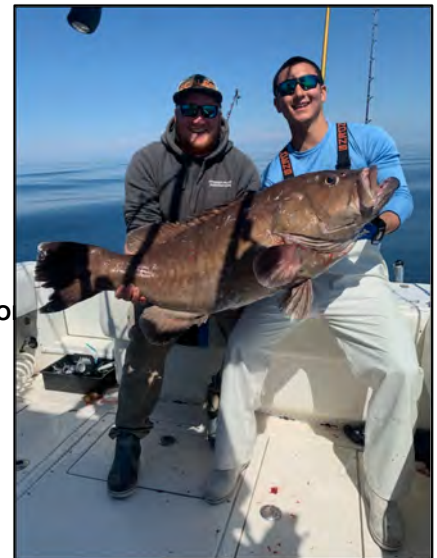
Virginia Grouper Rig



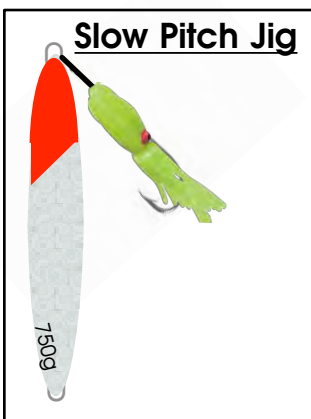
Slow pitch jigging is another option for deep drop fishing. He'll use a heavy (750g/26.5 ounce) butterfly jig on an extra heavy 8ft rod with an extended rod butt. To fish this type of lure an angler

raises the rod tip up about 7 feet and then allowing the jig to flutter back down.

Many of these jigs come with dual hooks attached to the upper or lower jig eyes. Captain Meyer will remove these hooks and replace them with a short monofilament leader, a thick body glow squid, and a J-hook without any bait.



Slow Pitch Jig



Warsaw Grouper



Snowy Grouper

Norfolk Anglers Club

www.norfolkanglersclub.com

Fishing Tips...

Early in the season Captain Meyers likes to target large grouper along the edge of the Norfolk Canyon using a bridle rigged whole bluefish. He'll bridle the fish by sewing the circle hook with rigging floss through the nose of the fish so that the hook rests on the fish's head fully exposed. He added that when a fish hooks up with a circle hook, *it's hooked*, and not going anywhere except to the boat.

Grouper Bridle Rig



Golden tilefish will be found in the soft mud around the offshore canyons. Captain Meyers uses a double dropper rig made up with 250# mono mainline with 150# mono leaders. Golden tilefish congregate in colonies in the soft sticky mud

around the canyon slopes. Depths range between 600-900 feet. Captain Meyers shared he doesn't recommend using the flashing lights for bottom fishing. In his experience they seem to draw the unwanted attention of sharks and sometimes squid, which can devour your bait in no time.

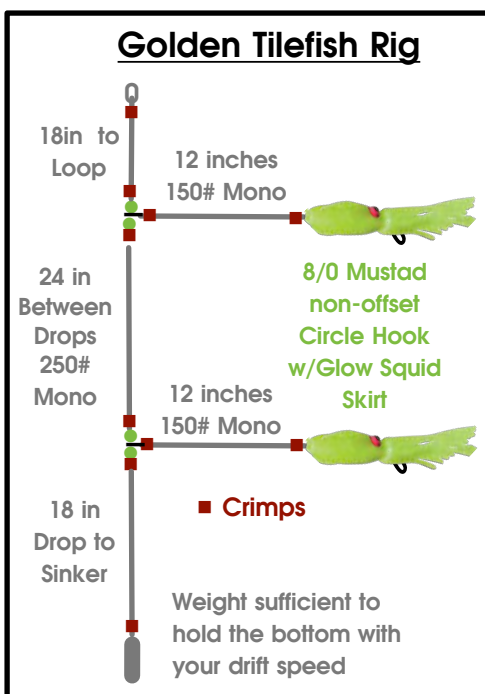
Captain Meyers mentioned the glow squid he uses on many of his rigs are a thicker artificial squid called "Fat Daddy" by Squidnation (www.SquidNation.com). They come in 3.0" and 5.25" sizes. He added, when using this style of glow squid additional lights are not necessary.



A cousin to the larger golden tilefish is the blue line tilefish. They can be found in shallower water and on pebble/broken shell bottom. They have a grey appearance with a distinctive blue stripe over their eye. Because of the shallower depths a more standard two drop rig can be used, similar to what you might use for sea bass fishing. Captain Meyers ties his blue line tilefish rigs with 80# monofilament line with two dropper loops with J-hooks. He described it as *"2 Hooks, Bait, and a Weight"* nothing more complicated than that.

Slow pitch jigging with lighter (120-250g) butterfly jigs is another good technique for blue line tiles. He added, using jigs will usually result in larger fish!

Black belly rosefish is another excellent catch from the deep. An angler will often run into a school of these while fishing the deep water and shouldn't pass on the opportunity. They get their name from the black lining inside the body cavity around their belly. They have a bright orange color and a firm white flesh. Rosefish will usually hit your bait on the way down while bottom fishing. Capt Meyers has a unique *"Black Belly Buster Rig"* tied with 100# monofilament. Once he finds a school of rosefish he'll drop down a multiple 6 hook rig with cut bait on lighter weight white marlin style circle hooks.

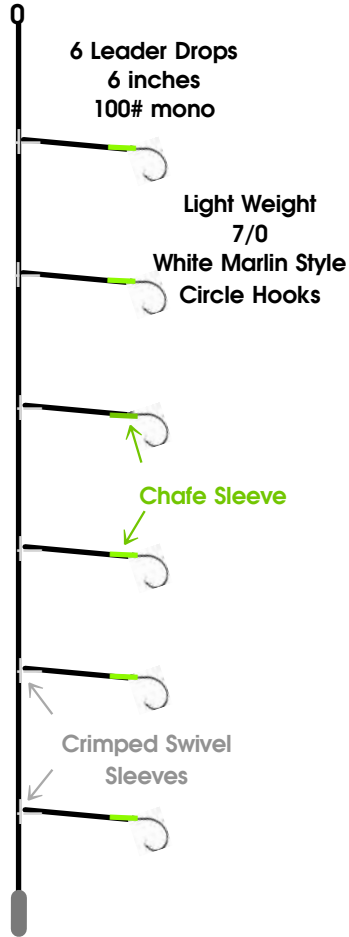


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Fishing Tips...

Black Belly "Buster" Rig



The "Black Belly Buster" Rig is made up with 100# mono with crimped swivel sleeves where the 6 inch drops to the circle hooks. A glow chafe sleeve (photo right) is added for protection from the many small teeth.



Captain Meyers shared that electric reels make deep dropping less labor intensive, using an electric reel to bring in a fish disallows for a game fish citation or state record. He recommends and uses the Spooled Up Tackle "Speedy Crank" to bring rigs up to check/change the bait. They're a handle extension that can be attached to a cordless drill to spin the reel handle instead of hand cranking in over a 1,000 feet of line. They currently fit Avet 30, 50, and 80 & Shimano TLD and Tiagra reels (www.spooleduptackle.com)

Spooled Up Tackle



Heads-N-Tails

Captain Eric Meyers

(757)573-9569

TheFishFinder1@yahoo.com



Find us on:
facebook®

Heads~N~Tails Charters

Fishing Reports...

18 FEB: I fished Rudee Inlet using frozen shrimp on the incoming tide. I spent most of the trip moving around, trying to find bites that just weren't there.

I ended up in Lake Wesley, keeping in contact with a kayaker who set up 60-70 yards from me. I finally caught my only fish, a 14-inch Puppy Drum, which I tagged and released for the Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program.

I did manage to catch and release a handful of Blue Crabs that didn't mind the cool water temperature. The kayaker near me also caught a Red Drum in the 25-27-inch range. After talking with him at the ramp, that was his only fish as well. The water temperature at the surface was 44 degrees.

- Alex Perez



9 FEB: Jennifer and I went to a private lake in Halifax North Carolina. We caught 40 crappie. The biggest was 24 inches and was caught by Jennifer. We also got one large mouth bass and one chain pickerel. We caught all



fish in open water. We fished some trees that are found in the lake and not one bite. I took 20 home to eat and released the rest of the fish. *A greay day fishing!*

- Jere Humphrey



ITS BACK!



POQUOSON KIWANIS FISHING FLEA MARKET & NAUTICAL ART SHOW

Saturday March 9, 2024

Poquoson High School

8AM-1PM

Admission: \$5.00

For more information and vendor application:

Rick Neff 757-303-8923

Aaron Holmes 804-832-0366

VENDORS RESERVE YOUR SPACE NOW!



31 JAN – 1 FEB: John Curry, Mary, and I adventured to Smith Mountain Lake for some winter Striper fishing. Freshwater regulations allow two fish up to 30 inches per person per day. We booked two 1/2-day charters with Captain Bert of Mitchell's Point Guide Services and spent the night in a two-bedroom suite at Halesford Harbour Inn (A very reasonable and nice motel/marina if you bring your own boat.)

After a four-hour drive from Smithfield, we met Captain Bert at 1:00 PM and headed out. This was totally different Striper fishing than we were used to, and Captain Bert took time to explain the equipment and techniques. First, he had Garmin Searching "Live Scan," which scanned 150 feet out and surface to the bottom of the water column. With the transducer mounted to the trolling motor, he could scan 360 by turning the motor. The other unique feature was his "Thumper," a device that automatically banged on the bottom of the boat about every two seconds like you were hitting it with a rubber mallet.

We jigged and had rods out with live bait at the same time. The jigging rods were light and very nice with line counter reels. We fished 3/4 oz jigs with transparent silver five-inch jerk shads. The live bait, Thredfin, and small Gizzard Shad were fished from slightly heavier slow-action rods with a Carolina rig and number four circle hook. The live bait rigs only caught four or five Stripers; the rest were caught on jigs.

So, the afternoon of Jan 31, we ended up catching seven Stripers 24 inches to 29 inches, and we lost three. On February 1, we met Captain Bert at 7:30 AM and were shortly into the fish. We fished till about 11 AM and had landed ten Stripers 24 to 28 inches, lost three or four, and also caught a few White Bass. The weather was chilly but clear for our great trip.

- Henry and Mary Troutner





15 FEB: I went fishing at Lake Smith/Lawsen with Russell Willoughby on one of the few warmer days this month. Winds were out of the north but light most of the morning, but it was colder (33) earlier, so we didn't get started till noon. The water temperature was 51 degrees. Wonderful!!! The first stop produced nothing, but the second stop, Russell almost instantly had a nice 12-inch crappie for another club minimum release.

Soon after measuring that fish, I had a nice 14-inch, 1.58 lbs. crappie in the boat. As we were measuring the crappie, my other rod went off with line ripping, but it didn't jump like bass do. It quickly buried itself in the lily pads, but it felt like a big one, and we just knew it had to be a chain pickerel. Slowly pulling the line towards me, I could feel it was still there, and I got it free of the pads. It was a chain pickerel three pounds, 22.75 inches. Both of those fish were hooked solid, which really helped get them out of the lily pads. Then in no time I had another big crappie 13.75 inches weighing 1.34 pounds in the boat.

We caught a couple more there but decided to move around. The bite was still on even though the wind picked up, making it more difficult to fish. All of our fish were released. My total was 14 inches, 2-13.75 inches, and 13.5 inches club minimum crappie plus a couple of smaller ones and the one chain pickerel.

Russell got three club minimums of 12.5 inches, 12.75 inches, 13 inches crappie, and several smaller ones. Funny that we didn't catch any bass. Didn't see any bait anywhere, either. But definitely, a great fish-catching day! I really needed that.

- Dr. James W. Ike Eisenhower



9 FEB: Windy, cold, cloudy, water temperature was 42.5 degrees. John Curry wanted to run his boat one more time before the annual maintenance. So, Mary and I met him at 9:00 AM. John had gotten some minnows in his trap, and we had frozen shrimp and Fishbites for bait. We fished a few spots on Brewers Creek and explored a small creek until we ran out of water. Not a bite.



29 FEB: Leap year - leap into fishing. Mary and I



hit the Nottoway River to see if the Shad had arrived yet. It only took a couple of casts to connect with our first fish.

We fished from noon to 2 PM and caught 30, all released.

- Henry and Mary Troutner



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Offer expires: 6/1/2024

Sea Tow Hampton Roads

757-496-1999 \ seatow.com

Angler Interests

Special Black Sea Bass Season ENDS March 1st



At midnight on February 29th the Special February Black Sea Bass Season closes. It's important that anglers who hold a Special Season Permit, whether you fished or not, make their required reports to VMRC. Reporting can be done online through the Saltwater Journal at www.vasaltwaterjournal.com or using forms provided by the VMRC.



Golden Tilefish Recreational Season Closes in the SAFMC area on February 29th



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) announced the Recreational Golden Tilefish season in federal waters (3-200nm) closes on February 29th.

This announcement is in compliance with the current accountability measure which states NOAA Fisheries will project the length of the recreational fishing season for golden tilefish based on catch rates from the previous fishing year and announce the end date of the recreational season.

Estimates indicate recreational landings for the 2024 fishing year will reach the 2024 recreational catch limit. Therefore, NOAA Fisheries announces that the end date of the recreational season for golden tilefish is February 29, 2024, and the recreational sector for golden tilefish in the South Atlantic federal waters will be closed from March 1 through December 31, 2024.

Operation Paddle Smart: "If Found" Stickers available

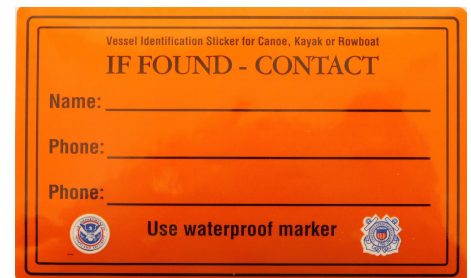


When the Coast guard or local emergency responders receive a report or discover a paddle craft adrift, there is no way to determine if the vessel was washed off of a beach during high tide or was separated from its owner during the course of a boating accident. In these situations, the Coast Guard has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

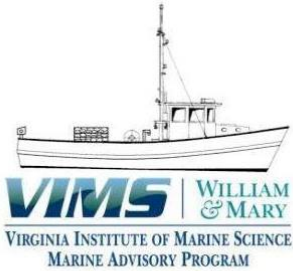
The stickers are weatherproof, reflective, and provide room for the vessel owner's name and two phone numbers using a waterproof marker. The "If Found" sticker should be placed in a highly visible location inside the vessel's cockpit or near the operators station. The stickers are weatherproof, reflective,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



Angler Interests

Virginia Charter Boat Workshop



Do you run a charter boat, or have you ever thought about taking folks out fishing professionally? The annual Virginia Charter Boat Workshop will be March 30 at VIMS and is the perfect opportunity to make sure you are operating your business safely and are up to date with the latest fishery regulations.

Registration is open to anyone, but space is limited:
<https://forms.gle/CZL4A82nYhLREhd49> .

Questions? email susanna@vims.edu

Save the Date!

Virginia Charter Boat Workshop

at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester Point

Saturday, **March 30**, 8:15 – 12:45

Featured speakers: United States Coast Guard
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Virginia Marine Resources Commission
NOAA Greater Atlantic Region
Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association
Virginia Institute of Marine Science

Space limited, register for free:
<https://forms.gle/5STES8NQBxrcNVe98>

Questions? susanna@vims.edu



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