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Rich Watts, the Capt from the team "Bite Me" with a nice Flat-tie that ate Pink from Ocean City back bay!



These Pheasants were downed at Rose Hill Game Preserve in Virginia.



Deal Island bottom fishing aboard the 'Kingfish II' remains very good this month and all signs point to a productive August as well.





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By Lenny Rudow

“Hooked on Fishing”

Coastal Bay Relaxation

rolled down the road to OC for another day of flounder fishing even though I knew it wouldn't exactly be red-hot.

Here's why: there's a definite sense of relaxation that permeates Ocean City and the surrounding areas. Just about everyone in town is on vacation, and just about everyone around is more interested in having fun than in loading the cooler. You'll see people swimming and clamming, jet-skiers going by, and in all likelihood, if you fish behind Assateague at one time or another you'll enjoy a wild pony sighting. The waters are sheltered, and even in a blow, remain more or less fishable. And although the average flounder may be small and the numbers may not be great, it's hard not to have fun while flounder fishing in

For decades, I've poo-poo'ed coastal bay flounder fishing in Ocean City and Indian River. Generally speaking the catch consists of few fish, the vast majority of which are throw-backs. And when I go on the hunt for flounder I want to catch a healthy pile of fish with plenty of them that are big enough to measure by pounds, instead of inches. Lately, however, my outlook on coastal bay flounder fishing has evolved.

This came about after being more or less forced into spending a day behind OC, so we could film the pilot for a new



This flattie grabbed a GULP bait near the airport, behind Assateague Island.

fishing show. It's called "Got Bait?" and it puts bait up against lures in different fishing situations, to find out which works better. I had figured on filming elsewhere, but some reliable sources informed me that there was a decent flattie bite in Assawoman Bay. And while the fishing wasn't exactly what I'd call spectacular, we did hook into a decent number of flounder. (I'm not going to say exactly how many, or whether bait or lures won the day—you'll have to watch the show, which can be found on Boats.com and YouTube, to find out.)

The really interesting thing is, I had a great time. And two weeks later when I had a free day, I hitched up the boat and

the coastal bays. We only caught eight fish on that second trip, and only two were keepers. Yet once again, I had a great time. And I'll bet you will, too, if you give it a shot the next time you're in town.

Indian River Flounder – Try right in the inlet, and along the channel edges where the inlet opens up into the bay. If that's not productive, swing back behind Burton Island (the island across from the Indian River Marina) and try drifting through the channels between Burton, Middle, and Lynch Thicket Islands. (Little Ditch, Big Ditch, and Massey's Ditch).

On calm days with an oceancapable



The crew prepares for filming a day of flounder fishing, behind Ocean City, Maryland.

boat, you can also pop through the inlet and try drifting along the artificial reef sites near-by. There's one at 74°59.60 x 38°40.30 (about four miles from the inlet) and another at 74°56.45 x 38°36.60 (about five miles from the inlet – go to the Delaware DNR web site, and they list GPS coordinates for a number of artificial reefs in state waters). At these sites, try drifting close alongside the structure to find the flat fish.

Ocean City Flounder – The Thoroughfare is the old stand-by spot behind OC; just follow the channel going into the bay from the Rt. 50 bridge, which dog-legs to port at about 10th street. After crossing the open water Drum Island will be on your left, and productive flounder grounds can be found anywhere from here through the next mile or two of the channel. Pay particular attention to the area where the channel dog-legs back to the right, as both deep holes and shallow water flats can be found close by.

At other times, heading behind Assateague is a better move. The standard spot to fish here is the relatively tight area behind the Ocean City Municipal Airport, but truth be told, any of the channel edges behind Assateague can be productive—and sometimes it's so crowded at the airport, you'll do better elsewhere.

You can go through the inlet and fish along the near-shore wrecks and reefs here, too. There are plenty to choose from (some barely a mile from the inlet) and the best way to get to know what's where is to join the Ocean City Reef Foundation. It only costs \$50 to join

and get their reef charts, which detail dozens of artificial reef sites with literally hundreds of different spots—GPS coordinates included.

In all of these areas, two tactics are generally applied. One is drifting with a Fluke Killer rig, baited with a bull minnow and a strip of squid. Add enough weight to keep it on bottom, and remember not to set the hook until you feel a heavy thump (instead of a nibble), which indicates the fish has the bait securely in its mouth and is swimming away.

The second way to target flounder is with a single lure or tandem rig employing either jig heads or bucktails, sweetened with Berkley GULP lures. Both twister tails and shrimp versions will work; just give the lures a bit of action as you drift along, and set the hook on the initial strike since flounder usually attack these lures with vigor.

Check out Got Bait? on Boats.com or YouTube and you'll get a detailed look at how to set up each of these rigs. You'll also find out which one worked better—a heck of a lot better, in fact—when we put bait and lures head to head against each other. And striper addicts, stay tuned. Episode II, which we just filmed a few weeks ago on the Chesapeake, puts live spot up against jigs for stripers and includes special guest angler Shawn Kimbro. Meanwhile, if you have some spare time or are headed down to the beach, consider taking an afternoon to go flounder fishing. It may not be “red hot” most of the time, but it is a heck of a lot of fun.

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Fishing & Hunting Journal

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Mike Bowie from Westminster, Maryland caught the 2nd place fish in the 31st Annual Championship on the Chesapeake Tournament held May 2-4, 2014. The fish weighed in 47.65 pounds, 50 inches.

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

Isaiah Chapter 6 begins with the startling words: "In the year that King Uzziah died..."

Uzziah was a godly king who had ruled Judah for many years. When he died, it caused a national calamity. Uzziah had defeated all the enemies of Judah. He had improved the living conditions as well as the economy of his nation. He had also built up a strong national defense.

In II Chronicles the Bible says, "But when he (Uzziah) was strong his heart was lifted up to his destruction." King Uzziah had usurped the office of a priest and offered incense in the Temple. Because he disobeyed, God struck him with leprosy and he died in disgrace.

Judah was paralyzed. All around the people saw disaster, disillusionment and despair. However, the prophet Isaiah says, "In the year King Uzziah died I saw the Lord." Everyone else saw the crisis, but Isaiah saw the Lord.

In our nation many problems haunt us for an answer. It even seems that, to some degree, our problems are beyond us. I hear many bewildered people today in search of hope for the future.

Blessed is the man, who in the midst of it all can see the Lord. In Lamentations Chapter 5, the prophet Jeremiah paints the picture of the fallen city of Jerusalem after it was burned and pillaged by the Babylonians. He says, "Thou O Lord remainest forever, thy throne from generation to generation."

My friend, look to the Lord. He it is that has made us and not we ourselves. Let's follow Isaiah's example and see the Lord.

This was the faith of our fathers and I trust that it is yours.

— MEL BRINDLEY
Pastor

Chestertown (Md.) Baptist Church

Delaware record mahi-mahi catch reported



A Rehoboth Beach angler has caught a state record mahi-mahi. The 56.9-pound mahi-mahi, also known as a dolphinfish, was caught July 6 by William D. "Butch" Emmert. Emmert was trolling with a ballyhoo lure in 60 fathoms in the tip of the Baltimore Canyon area of the Atlantic Ocean when he caught the fish. He was fishing on the Elizabeth Jane, captained by Jason King out of Indian River Marina. State fish and wildlife officials said the catch qualifies as a record in the Delaware Sport Fishing Tournament since it was caught from a boat out of a Delaware port. The previous record was 52 pounds, 15 ounces, set Aug. 18, 2003, by Charles Ciciola of Limerick, Pennsylvania.



Greg Fawcett, a Recreational Angler from Loudon, NH was pleasantly surprised to find this award winning 24 inch Sheepshead in the Chesapeake Bay on 7/18/2014.

Photo courtesy of MD DNR anglers log.

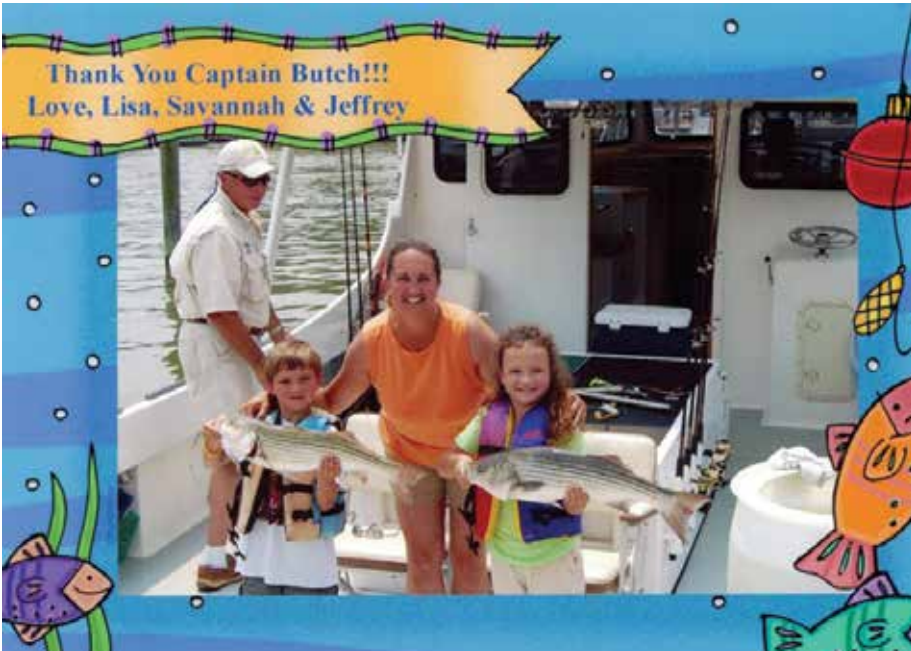
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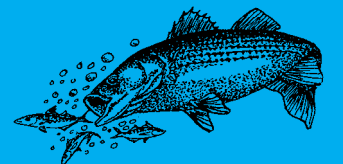
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“Tackle Box Tim”

Family Affair – Perch Fishing

By Tim Sherman

There is no doubt that a lot of memories can be created with rod and reel in hand. It's

amazing the joy that can come about by catching the simple species known as white perch. Early this season, I had the pleasure of having families get together and create such memories, and the outings were two days apart.

Rewind to early spring when my coworker Josh wanted to introduce his daughter Megan and son Tim to the world of fishing. He bought them tackle and took them fishing a couple of times and I promised to take them out as well. His early season trips were uneventful and I knew I could have them catching perch.

Josh put some pressure on me. He announced that he and his family were moving back to their native Nebraska and my window was short to take them. I'd taken two prior trips to the Patapsco and most of my spots were not producing. I was catching a few small perch, but not many and they were all caught in shallow water.

The morning of our trip came and I wanted Josh and his young ones to have a good day. I headed to the outer harbor and The Cannons. I hadn't been there yet, but I knew I had shallow water there. I caught a perch on my first cast on my hand-tied tandem rig. “Hmmm, this might be good,” I thought. That first fish was the beginning of a slow morning. Josh caught a few perch, including one about 10 inches. Megan was getting the knack of casting and only managed three. Tim held the hotrod, landing more than the rest of us. He had a few decent perch and a few doubles. My first fish was my only one. The rest of the time I caught the bottom.

The action slowed and I was ready to make a move. I wanted to

make a short run over to The Pipe. Having not caught many perch, Megan was up for a ride. I cranked the motor and made a long run to the Ore Pier. The Ore Pier had not been very forthcoming with perch to that point in the season. If we didn't catch any perch, we'd run into Bear Creek where the shallow fish were. For me, Megan brightened the slow catch with her giddiness, shrieks, and shrills as we bobbed across waves and boat wakes.

True to this year's form, the Ore Pier was void of perch, so we made a run to the creek. I knew we weren't going to catch big perch here, but there were numbers. I clipped off our tandem rigs and tied on Rooster Tail spinners. Megan struck first – and on her first cast. We rounded a point and everyone was picking off perch. Megan was the star.



Mike Gittins shows double-header white perch caught at The Pipe.

She seemed to be reeling at the speed they preferred.

Moments later my line took a tremendous jolt. I thought it was a catfish from

the surge, but the fish flashed to the side and I saw the telltale pattern that it was a chain pickerel. It turned and broke the 6-pound-test with its razor-sharp teeth. Megan continued her onslaught along the next two passes. In total she landed 6 perch, a 7-inch blue crab, and ended with a gorgeous sunfish. With the sunfish released, it was time to head to the Hard Yacht Café or lunch.

The day in prospective had two different views. I thought the day was subpar for what the fishery can produce. Josh and his kids had a great experience catching more than they ever had in one day.

Two days later, I was back on the trail of Patapsco perch. I had called Tom Gittins, 7 weeks retired from three decades of Federal service, to let him know that the bite was still off a bit. We were taking his son Mike out for his 37th birthday -- and he had fish fry in mind for his wife and kids. Here we go again with pressure on the faux-captain. Actually with Tom and Mike, they are really out for an enjoyable day on the water. A few perch for the table would be a bonus. I also let Tom know that we would be dealing with a south wind. There is nowhere to hide in the Patapsco from winds coming from that direction.

Still all of my bites were coming shallow, in 5 feet or less. We headed to the shoreline that leads to Kelly's Corner. Mike and I were flinging tandem rigs, while Tom tossed a KVD square bill crank bait. It got walloped on his first cast, but it was merely swiped at. He cast in again and caught a 14-inch striper. Things looked promising. We made a few passes and landed a few perch and throwback rockfish. Surprisingly, the tandem rig wasn't the hot lure. Tom's caught his on a crankbait, I cast a 1/4-ounce custom-painted rattle trap, while Mike was lagging behind with a Lit'l Fishie. The crankbait and trap were responsible for the first few keeper perch. I landed a beefy perch, and before we left the shoreline, we had three in the box.

Soon the action died and the wind picked up. I had to think fast about a leeward shoreline. The 1/2-Mile Rock Pile, with The Pipe included, was my destination. We weren't totally out of the wind but at least it was bearable. We worked along the rocks until I located a school of perch near The Pipe. It's a

highly reliable spot and tandem rigs are always productive. The spot did not disappoint. Mike quickly caught up in numbers and we contributed whopper perch to the cooler. Before the perch got wise to our fake minnow rigs, we put had a total of 11 for Mike's fish fry.

With no bites and the wind picking up there was only one place to get out of the blow -- the Bear Creek hot spot. As with two days before, we tied on spinners and caught small perch. Mike was able to land a long, sleek yellow perch to the fry. After plying a point where we couldn't keep the small ones off the hook, we called it a day made out way to the Hard Yacht Café.

It's funny how one views success for a fishing trip. With the Weimer family, I thought I'd come up short on the catch. Yet, Josh assured me before he moved that they had a great time. With the Gittins anglers the measure of success, even though perch fishing finally turned on, was having a father and son on board for an enjoyable day on the water. Putting a few big perch in the cooler was a bonus. I'll tell you this. White perch fishing is great family fun no matter what your prospective.



Megan Weimer is all smiles after catching her first sunfish in Bear Creek.

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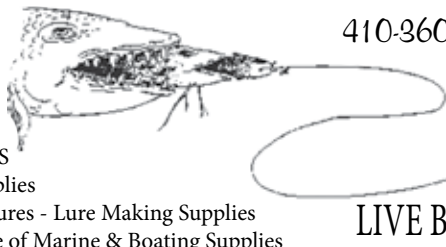
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Framework sets up rationale for blue crab management decisions

By Carl Hershner

The current management of the blue crab stock in Chesapeake Bay is a case study of the application of the Bay Program's Decision Framework.

Officially adopted by the Program in 2012, the framework is designed to implement effective adaptive management for all Bay Program activities. The process of setting explicit goals, developing well-informed management strategies, carefully monitoring and assessing system response to those strategies, and then adapting management based on what is learned is exemplified by the present crab management.

The blue crab abundance outcome statement in the new draft Bay agreement is the current goal of Bay crab management. As explained below, present and future efforts to achieve the outcome follow the basic outline of the decision framework.

Blue Crab Abundance Outcome

Maintain a sustainable blue crab population based on the 2012 target of 215 million adult females and continue to refine population targets through 2025 based on best available science.

Decision Framework

- **Articulate Outcome:** Important characteristics are that the goal be explicit, measurable and time bound. This goal provides two performance metrics: maintenance of a sustainable

population and continued refinement of the population target. Both of these are measurable/observable, and they are time-bound in the sense that "sustainable" and "continue" imply immediate and constantly iterating efforts.

- **Describe Factors Influencing Outcome Attainment:** The science behind the outcome recognizes that in addition to fishing pressure, habitat quality, recruitment success and predation all potentially affect the maintenance of a sustainable population.

- **Assess Current management Efforts:** At present, the primary management effort is controlling fishing pressure. While the Chesapeake Total Maximum Daily Load is aimed at increasing habitat quality — more SAV and less hypoxia — there are no other specific efforts aimed at blue crabs.

- **Develop a Management Strategy:** The current strategy is refined management of fishing pressure, specifically fishing pressure on overwintering female crabs. Further efforts to manage commercial and recreational fisheries may be necessary to achieve the outcome. Additional habitat management efforts may also be necessary (e.g. sanctuaries).

- **Develop a Monitoring Program:** The current monitoring of the overwintering population of females is excellent. Monitoring of the commercial and recreational fisheries' pressure is less robust. The current population drop occurred despite the existence of ample female crabs. This is evidence that other factors (e.g. habitat quality, recruitment, predation) are also very important for sustaining the target population. It will be necessary to monitor those factors to learn what

additional management efforts might be necessary.

- **Assess Performance:** Managers have already concluded that the current management effort, in terms of a minimum of 215 million female crabs, is obviously insufficient to ensure a sustainable population.

- **Manage Adaptively:** The assessment that the current management strategy is insufficient will motivate a reassessment of the understanding of critical factors and the management strategies designed to address those factors. Revised strategies and targets should be the adaptive response.

The challenge confronting the Bay Program as it moves to articulate new goals and desired outcomes is to structure those statements and the supporting management strategies so they reflect the same basic logic evidenced in the crab management effort.

A key to establishing the framework for learning and improving management is to make explicit the reasons for undertaking any action.

When the outcome, in terms of the change in existing conditions or procedures, is clear it becomes possible to assess management efforts and determine whether continuation is justified. The important question is not "what are we doing?" but "why are we doing it?"

Once the work under the new agreement is framed in this way, the Bay Program will be positioned to continually improve its efforts to improve the Bay and provide increased transparency and accountability for the public.

Courtesy of the Bay Journal

ASMFC Schedules Second Atlantic Menhaden Stock Assessment Workshop for August 12-15, 2014 in Beaufort, NC

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's second Atlantic Menhaden Stock Assessment Workshop will be conducted August 12 - 15, 2014 at the National Marine Fisheries Service's Southeast Fisheries Science Center, General Auditorium, 101 Pivers Island Road, Beaufort, North Carolina. The assessment will evaluate the health of Atlantic menhaden and inform the management of this species. The Commission's stock assessment process and meetings are open to the public, with the exception of discussions of confidential data, when the public will be asked to leave the room.

The Commission welcomes the submission of alternative analyses and models for consideration in the Atlantic menhaden benchmark stock assessment. For alternative analyses and models to be considered, they must be sent in the required format, with accompanying description of methods, to the Commission by July 14, 2014. For more information on requirements for submission and presentation of materials at the Assessment Workshop, please contact Dr. Genny Nesslage (gnesslage@asmfc.org), ASMFC Stock Assessment Scientist.

The benchmark stock assessment will be peer reviewed through the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review process in December 2014 in Atlantic Beach, North Carolina. For more information or details on attending the workshop, please contact Michael Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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Taylor Mooney caught his second Snakehead of the year out of the Wicomico River. He was fishing near Brew River restaurant in the Wicomico River on low tide using a dark green worm on 7/23/14 when this 31" Snakehead was caught. Photo courtesy of MD DNR anglers log.

Breeding duck numbers up 8 percent

The US Fish and Wildlife Service released its report on 2014 Trends in Duck Breeding Populations, based on surveys conducted in May and early June. Total populations were estimated at 49.2 million breeding ducks in the surveyed area. This estimate represents an 8-percent increase from last year's estimate of 45.6 million birds, and is 43 percent higher than the 1955-2013 long-term average. This continues a three-year trend of exceptional water conditions and population numbers for many species.

"It looks like another good waterfowl breeding year for a good portion of the prairies and the boreal forest," said DU CEO Dale Hall. "Precipitation in the form of snow and rain has provided sufficient water to fill important wetlands in key breeding habitats. We hope this will result in good production and another great flight of birds migrating in the fall. DU and its partners continue to work hard to protect and restore habitat to provide for the needs of these birds and so much more. While we still have much work to do in delivering habitat and securing key conservation policies for sustaining these populations, we are heartened by the good results we have seen in the past few years."

The main determining factor for duck breeding success is wetland and upland habitat conditions in the key breeding landscapes of the prairies and the boreal forest. Conditions observed across the U.S. and Canadian survey areas during the 2014 breeding population survey were improved or similar to last year. Total pond counts for the U.S. and Canada combined showed 7.2 million ponds, which is similar to the 2013 estimate and 40 percent above the long-term average.

"Reports from DU biologists indicate a strong breeding effort across the prairies," said DU Chief Conservation Officer Paul Schmidt. "This is despite late winter conditions that delayed nesting activity in some areas by one to two weeks. We need more moisture in the Western Boreal Forest and in parts of southern Alberta and Saskatchewan, and higher-than-usual water levels have posed some challenges for nesters in the Eastern Region. But overall this is a good breeding season, and depending on local conditions hunters across North America should look forward to another strong fall flight."

"This spring, as has been the case for the past several years, saw abundant moisture across much of North America's most important duck breeding areas," said DU Chief Biologist Scott Yaich. "That bodes well for duck breeding success this summer and, we hope, for hunting this fall. But we remain concerned with the continuing and escalating loss of nesting habitat in these areas. Because ducks need water, wetlands to hold the water and upland habitats to successfully raise their young, the ongoing loss of grasslands and wetlands across the Prairie Pothole Region will increasingly impact the number of ducks in the fall flight in the long-term."

The spring surveys provide the scientific basis for many management programs across the continent, including hunting season dates and bag limits. The four flyway councils and the US Fish and Wildlife Service Regulations Committee will meet in late July to recommend the season structure and bag limits for 2014-15. Individual states will make their specific selections within a federal framework of season length, bag limit and dates. Hunters should check the rules in their states for final dates.



Here is Master Alex Rhodes of Trappe Maryland with an awesome catch aboard "Southpaw". Rough seas and feeling a little under the weather didn't stop this angler from bagging a great stripper. Pictured with Alex is one of Southpaw's first mate Danny Croward.



Richard Bohles with a Western Shore coyote. Photo courtesy of Clyde's Sport Shop.

Sunday Hunting Law Goes Into Effect in Western Md.

FREDERICK, Md. - A new law went into effect to expand Sunday hunting in Western Maryland.

The Maryland General Assembly passed two laws this session. One adds additional deer Sunday hunting days in Frederick County when the season starts in September.

The other law allows hunters in Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties to hunt all game species in season on Sundays.

Commissioner Billy Shreve says he hopes the new law can help control the deer population in Frederick County.

"I think the Sunday hunting bill is a good thing for hunters in Frederick County because it lets the average person that works Monday through Friday, it gives them an extra day to hunt, and extra day to harvest deer for their family and put food on the table, and keep the deer out of people's yards," Shreve (R) said.

Shreve says there's 10 times more deer than is considered normal in the southern part of Frederick County.

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Are Pennsylvania Coyotes a \$4 Million Problem?

by Craig Dougherty

Lately the state of Pennsylvania has experienced a great deal of teeth gnashing (pun intended). The Board of Game Commissioners is all worked up about coyote predation -- and for good reason. Coyotes and other predators seem to impact deer numbers across the country, and are continuing to grow as a topic of concern within the whitetail community. Consequently the Commission has ordered staffers in the Keystone State to tackle the 'yote problem anew.

Great, right? But the rub is the \$3.9 million research proposal submitted by staffers. Everyone seems to be choking on the price, and some aren't convinced fawn predation qualifies as a four-million-dollar question. Presumably staffers are approaching the problem with a fresh eye, which makes sense in this scenario. If you want to study coyotes from the ground up, then a big picture look is necessary to determine whether a real problem exists and whether intervention (i.e. reducing coyote numbers) will really make a difference. And big studies carry big budgets.

Interestingly, one of the project's leading skeptics actually submitted the pricey proposal. Deer and elk section supervisor Dr. Chris Rosenberry has gone on record stating his

opinion that a predator-intervention study isn't necessarily the best use of taxpayer dollars. He cites a major study on Pennsylvania predators that has already been completed, and asserts no evidence exists to suggest a predation problem in the state. According to Rosenberry the Commission assesses predation on deer herds every year. While predators do kill fawns, no field data to date reflects an "unacceptable predator impact" on either fawn recruitment or the deer population at large.

So why spend taxpayer money on something that is already monitored and doesn't seem to be affecting deer numbers? Board director Jay Delaney has a different view: "Hunters from all over the state are reporting decreases in deer numbers," Delaney said. "Our last study was almost 15 years ago. A lot has happened with coyotes, bears and bobcats since then. You hear about predators everywhere you go in this state."

QDMA wildlife biologist Kip Adams confirmed fawn recruitment is down significantly on his 700-acre northern Pennsylvania family farm after consulting years of meticulous personal records. "We used to harvest 15 does each year to keep our deer herd in line with the habitat. Now it is down to five," Adams said. Adams also noted the increased number of bears in the area.

Rosenberry is confident the Commission has a handle on fawn predation and deer numbers without pursuing an

expensive research endeavor. Should a marked decline in deer numbers occur, he plans on cutting back on deer tags to reduce doe harvests. Rosenberry points to field studies throughout Pennsylvania that demonstrate a reduced antlerless deer harvest corresponds with greater deer numbers, despite predation.

So where do hunters fit into the equation? It all boils down to hunter satisfaction. We've spent 30 years convincing deer hunters to take does, and the practice has become widely accepted. It seems an ample doe harvest has become a critical component of a good deer season. Which begs the question: What happens when Rosenberry and like-minded managers significantly curtail doe tags to compensate for coyotes, bears, and bobcat predation?



Nicole Lable took this 800lb Buffalo in Twin Falls Idaho last fall.



Chris Poole with a 6 foot shark caught off the Assateague Surf. Chris Poole released this Sand Tiger back into the wild. *Sand Tigers are sluggish and slow moving, they are often seen around reefs and wrecks in loose schools. Hunts small fish and grows to 10.5 feet.



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FISH REPORT

John Mullican sent the MD DNR the following report from the upper Potomac. The Potomac has finally settled into summer low flows and the fish have settled into their predictable summer patterns. Fishermen have a mixed bag of fish to pursue including Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Channel Catfish, Muskie, and Carp. Fishermen targeting Smallmouth rely on small tubes, 4" stick worms, and topwaters. Dont overlook small blue and white poppers during the heat of the day when bass can be seen leaping for damsel flies in shallow, rocky runs. Most of these fish will be small, but a lot of fun to catch.

State Park impoundments such as Cunningham Falls Reservoir in Frederick County and Greenbriar Lake in Washington County offer great fishing for those not intimidated by beaches, paddle boats, and the like. Both of these impoundments offer abundant Largemouth Bass and impressively-sized sunfish. Target the deep weed edges with a piece of worm on a small jighead under a small float for steady action. A recent fish survey of Greenbriar Lake found numerous large redear sunfish, some over eleven inches! For Largemouth, target grass beds with topwater baits during the early morning or evening hours moving deeper during the day with wacky-rigged or Texas-rigged worms.

A recent annual population survey of Deep Creek Lake was conducted by fisheries staff surveying 20 stations throughout all habitat areas of the lake. The lake continues to support a diverse fishery with angling oppor-

tunities for Walleye, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Perch, Bluegill, Pumpkinseed, Rock Bass, Black Crappie, Chain Pickerel, Northern Pike, Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, and Common Carp. The Yellow Perch population is truly extraordinary; in just about every station we collected fish in the 12 to 14" size range. Large Bluegill and Pumpkinseed were also common in all areas of the lake. Largemouth Bass abundance is highest in shallow coves with plenty of submerged aquatic vegetation and stumps, with many of the bass in the 15 to 20" size class. While fish were present in all shoreline habitats, the shallow ends of coves with aquatic vegetation held the greatest number and diversity of fish.

Fisheries biologists worked with members of the Western Maryland Fishing Guides Association to float stock 750 Rainbow Trout in the lower Catch and Return Trout Fishing Area of the North Branch Potomac River. The fishing guides used their rafts equipped with aerated coolers to float the river and distribute the trout in the more remote areas. Staff also stocked 250 in the upper C&R area of the North Branch Potomac River as well as 500 Rainbow Trout in the Youghiogheny River C&R Trout Fishing Area.

Approximately 8,000 Rainbow Trout fingerlings and 1,500 Brown Trout fingerlings from Albert Powell Hatchery into Gunpowder Falls tailwater (5,000 Rainbows only) and Little Seneca Creek tailwater (3,000 Rainbow Trout and 1,500 Brown Trout) for put-and-grow to provide catchable size trout for anglers.

Approximately 20,000 Striped Bass fingerlings at 500/lb. (2 inches in length) and 400 four inch Striped Bass from Manning Hatchery and stocked approximately 15,000 fingerlings into Liberty Reservoir and the remaining 5,000 into Piney Run Reservoir in Carroll County.

14,000 Largemouth Bass fingerlings were stocked in Chicamuxen Creek, a tributary of the Potomac River. The fish were stocked to Concord Cove, an area that historically served as an exceptional nursery for juvenile Largemouth Bass.

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Reservation Contact: Mike Theis, Rose Hill Game Preserve Manager
mtheis@rosehillfarm.org or 540-423-1930

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By Jim Gronaw

Channel and blue catfish are often thought of as the Rodney Dangerfield of the angling world... little respect. I have been in bass boats where the owner/operator refused to allow anything with whiskers in the boat. Sad, especially since most catfish I have caught could slap most of the bass I have caught silly, at least when compared pound-for-pound, and on like tackle. Throw in the fact that many fine channel and bluecats are taken on lures should be enough to convince anglers that kitty fish are not the bottom scroungers that most of our politicians are. Yes, they take a variety of messy, smelly baits. But they tend to 'prefer' fresh fish and crustaceans... just like you and I.

Over the years, my catfishing has evolved slowly to the point where I sometimes have to improvise to be able to stay on top of the cattie game. This is especially true with channel cats in small lake and pond environs. Here, channel cats can become hook-shy, once released, and can shun the same bait that they ravished just a few days ago. Personally, I believe they are smarter than most fishermen give them credit for. Cats catch on, and changing baits can be essential for success. Here are a few ideas that might just put a few more fillets in your pan this summer...

MARKET FISH... That's right, head to the fish market if you can't seem to catch and keep bait. Oily fish like mackerel and salmon are packaged in a variety of ways and often the change of pace is just what the catfish ordered when they have grown weary of standard issue stink baits. I have had remarkable success



Matt Gronaw shows a fine channel cat that fell for a cocktail.

"Fishin' Back East"

ALTERNATIVE BAITS FOR CATS

with jarred or frozen fish from the store when the bait catching got tough. Also, they frequently come in bite-sized pieces that are just right for a 2/0 or 4/0 circle hook. The juice that these fish chunks are packaged in are also an attractant and can cause a stir.

FRESH FALL FISH... Our largest minnow in the Mid Atlantic slope rivers are the common fallfish, which can grow to 18 inches or more. Fresh caught and kept on ice, they can be a powerhouse bait for summertime channel and blue cats in small rivers and tidal estuaries. I like to chunk them and fish them on slip-sinker rigs on the bottom of deeper holes and runs, allowing cats to move off several feet before setting the hook. A 12 incher will give you 6-7 baits and they hold up well when kept cold.

LIVE BLUEGILLS... Where legal, live sunfish or bluegills make an outstanding backup bait when catching gizzard shad gets tough. Additionally, they remain the premier live bait when pursuing flathead catfish in the Susquehanna area and beyond. Most local ponds have an abundance of them and they can be fished live or as a cut-bait option. On the lower Potomac, we have often used cut panfish as a backup and caught big fish to boot. My son Matt's largest blue, a 53 pounder from Virginia's James River, took a live sunfish in but 8 feet of water. Blues and channels will take the cut baits more readily while the flatheads seem to want a live offering when it comes to sunfish. Again, slip-sinker rigs are best for presenting lively sunfish.

CUT TROUT... Again, where legal, the common hatchery trout of 8 to 10 inches becomes forage in many waters, not only for bass, but for boss catties as well. Swimbait are designed to imitate these fish, and used as a cut bait option, they are oily and attractive to channels cats especially. They, too, can be purchased at the local markets and grocery stores and can often tempt an outsized freshwater rockfish as well.

CHICKEN LIVERS... Nothing new here, it's been a standard of the catfish crowd for decades and more. I like to wrap livers in cheese clothe 'sacks' and impale a hook through the sack, then cast to a likely spot. Keep them cold, and they are cheap enough that we can have plenty of bait.

SHRIMP... Yes, I know, shrimp are expensive. But there are times when it is almost like magic in small lake venues for big channel catfish. I wouldn't make a habit of it, but on more than one occasion we used shrimp leftover from a recent feed and plowed 3 to 10 pound channel cats in the lower Susquehanna River. They fit just right on a 2/0 hook and you don't miss many strikes with

them. Also on the same line of baits, try imitation crab meat. It's a little soft, but draws the fish when all else seems to fail.

COCKTAILS... Yup, that's right, give 'em a variety pack! We had success last summer and fall using a crab meat/nightcrawler combo on some nice whiskerfish that went to 8 pounds. And, I've caught some quality Potomac blue cats in the mid 30 pound range with a combo of a bluegill head and piece of shrimp. Mix it up, and try this, that and the other. In a real pinch, try Berkley

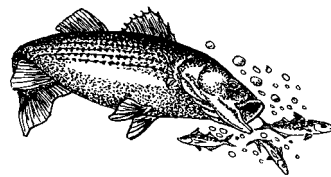
Gulp Shrimp and Minnows in the saltwater line for a tough, resilient bait, though expensive.

Lastly, let me point out that the old concept that channels and blues are strictly bottom feeders is untrue. Many, perhaps most, of my best channel cats have been caught off of float presentations 3 to 4 feet below the surface in the Susquehanna and in local lakes and ponds. Get your bait up off the bottom, especially in the morning and evening timeframes and you'll be surprised as to how many cats are up in the water column.



Fake crab meat put the whammy on this long channel cat.

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Leases pit Maryland watermen against oyster growers

By Rona Kobell - Courtesy of Chesapeake Bay Journal -

Maryland's commercial clambers and its aquaculture industry are at odds over how to share the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay, a clash that is pitting waterman against waterman in some cases and an old way of life against a new one.

At issue are two, 5-acre plots of bottom — one in the Chester River and one in the Patuxent River — that oyster farmers have applied to lease so they can grow crops. But clambers claim these areas are productive for catching razor clams, an important bait for crabbers, eel fishermen and recreational anglers.

As part of a public process, the Maryland Watermen's Association has objected to the leases. The association also recently took a vote to oppose all water-column aquaculture — which refers to all oysters grown off the bottom in cages — though it has said it would revisit that stance.

But the issue is far broader than the two plots in question, according to Robert T. Brown, the Maryland Watermen's Association's new president. It hinges on the exclusion of the state's 70-boat clam industry from aquaculture leasing decisions.

When Maryland began leasing oyster bottom in 2010, it barred would-be farmers from leasing natural oyster bars that watermen had worked for centuries. These oyster areas are known as the Yates bars, after the surveyor who mapped them a century ago. The oyster bars have names — often irreverent ones like Old Woman's Leg — and are plain to see on navigation maps.

But unlike oysters, clam populations

are not stable over decades. The Department of Natural Resources has not surveyed and named the clamming bars, and it is possible for a clamming area to not be productive for several years and then suddenly it is viable again.

"Up until this point, we had not protested any ground, but the clambers have got to make a living, too," Brown told the state's Aquaculture Coordinating Council Thursday night. "I'm not against aquaculture. I'm into it myself. But there has got to be a happy medium. There are areas that have got to be protected for clams."

Maryland is not known these days for its clamming industry. Hard clams require high salinities to survive, and the storms over the last century that tore up the inlets around Ocean City flooded clamming bottom with fresh water. In the 1960s, more efficient dredges in the coastal bays led to huge harvests, but eventually the population plummeted, according to paper on clam history written by the DNR's Mitch Tarnowski.

As with crabs and oysters, the state stepped in with size restrictions. Eventually, in 2001, the state banned hydraulic dredging for clams in the sea grass beds of the coastal bays. By then, little more than a dozen boats remained.

The bait clam industry has done better, with about 70 boats working the Chesapeake. Robert "Moochie" Gilmer, a clammer who is also president of the Queen Anne's County Watermen's Association, said he catches between 100 and 150 bushels a week. Productive razor clam areas include the Chester, Choptank, Patuxent and Eastern Bay.

"Considering the limited area we have, it's very difficult for us to give up any," Gilmer said.

But council member Johnny Shockley, a longtime waterman and now a successful oyster farmer, said that argument unfairly saddles a new industry as it tries to get off the ground while simultaneously absolving an old one of responsibility.

"I'm a waterman as much as you are and when you talk about what happened

to the clams I haven't heard you say a thing about over harvesting," Shockley said to Brown. "We have got to step up to the plate and take responsibility for these problems. I do not believe that knocking down a new industry is the way to do that."

Shockley has crabbed, dredged for oysters, and built boats and equipment in his more than 30 years as a waterman. He said there's no reason why clamming gear or pound nets and oyster farms can't co-exist, as they do now on Hooper's Island and several other places in the Chesapeake.

Del. Anthony O'Donnell agreed with Shockley that the state "can't turn off an industry because someone might clam there someday."

When Brown suggested he could ask friends and members of county watermen's associations whether a certain area had been clammed recently, O'Donnell rejected the idea.

"The notion of allowing the local oyster communities to veto or not veto — there should be something more objective than that," O'Donnell said.

Maryland's aquaculture coordinator Karl Roscher agreed that the state needed a more objective process for determining whether a bar is a productive clam area that should be off-limits or whether the gear can co-exist in that location.

"Right now, all we have is people saying, 'yes I clam there.' Or 'no, I don't,'" he said. "We don't have anything to screen against."

The council agreed to create a subcommittee, which Brown would sit on, that would come up with a map of productive clamming areas that it hoped would be taken into consideration when a prospective farmer applies for a lease. That way, the department can intervene and perhaps shift the lease away from the clamming grounds before the lease process begins.

The process takes about six months and involves multiple steps, so getting involved early will benefit both sides if there is a dispute. Otherwise, the case can drag on through the administrative courts for years.

But O'Donnell warned Brown to "be real about it" and only include the areas that are truly productive.

The clamming issue is not the first challenge for Don Webster, a University of Maryland extension agent and long-time coordinating council member who has been trying to establish aquaculture in Maryland for four decades. Oyster farmers have battled watermen who didn't want the competition; homeowners who didn't want their views obstructed; even conservationists who believed that oyster sanctuaries should remain dormant and not be given over to industries. The clambers, he said, would get a fair hearing at the council.

"We're not trying to put anyone out of work," Webster said. "If you have productive clam areas, that should be taken into consideration."



12 year old Brian Wink is on a happy youngster with his Turkey. Photo courtesy of Wink's Sporting Goods.

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You can also make these delicious cakes an appetizer. This recipe makes about 14 bite-size catfish cakes.



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Ingredients

- 1 lb. catfish fillets
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 tsp. dry mustard
- 1 tbs. mayonaise add more if they need to stick together better
- 2 tsp. Feisty Fish Rub Sportsman's Table Item #MG105
- 2 1/2 cups coarsely crushed round butter crackers
- 1 egg
- 1 tbs. canola oil or your desired amount for frying

Instructions

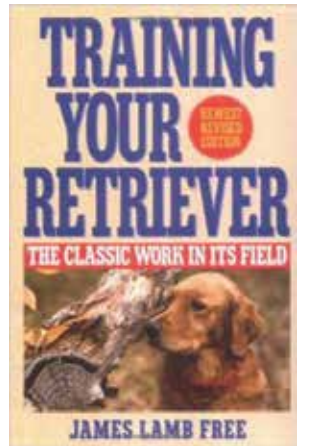
Place catfish in a saucepan with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and then simmer until fish flakes easily with a fork. Drain off water and pat dry. Mash up with a fork and place in a bowl. Add chopped onion, mustard, mayo, Feisty Fish Rub, cracker crumbs and egg. Mix well until blended. Heat enough canola oil to a depth of 1/4 inches. Form mixture into small patties for appetizers or larger ones for entree portions. Form and roll as if a cookie. Flatten and fry in hot oil until golden brown and then flip and fry until golden brown. Drain on towels.

Serve with red pepper sauce or your own remoulade sauce if desired.

Book of the Month

TRAINING YOUR RETRIEVER

Expert advice on choosing, training, and caring for a retriever is supplemented by comprehensive data on retriever trial-championship winners and the official specifications for each breed of retriever.



Customer reviews-Although geared toward training your dog to be a hunting retriever, this book is a must use when training your retriever, and I would venture to say, any dog. When used properly, this book can help you teach your dog skills which will make you and your dog much better companions. My dog once began to run out into the street in front of an oncoming car. Because he was trained to stop on command, he stopped running when I called, and he narrowly escaped death. This book will show you how to teach your dog these basic obedience skills, as well as skills you might not think very useful, but will come in handy later on. For example, it is essential to hunters that their retriever remain still and quiet when in a duck blind. I'll probably never be in a duck-blind, but this skill is useful when you need you dog to go lie down. I highly recommend this book

I first used this book to train a retriever. At the time I had no prior experience training a dog. I applied Mr Free's rules and in two weeks the dog knew the basic commands--sit, stay, come, heel, and quiet. Since that time, I have used Mr. Free's rules to train a Springer Spaniel and a Beagle. The latter had been to school and the owner could not walk the dog because of it pulling. I took the dog for a 15 minute walk applying Mr. Free's rules and returned the dog to the owner holding the leash with just two fingers!

Mr. Free's book is for those who want a HUNTING dog. If you're looking for a book to train Fido to do cute tricks for your friends like retrieve the paper go elsewhere. He trained dogs for field trials and intended them to be 1-owner dogs. I plan to train my next dog to be a more serious hunter than prior dogs I've owned. Even if you want a family dog that you can take in the field without being embarassed in front of your hunting buddies you can get several great methods from this book. Mr. Free stresses the importance of getting a good pup from exceptional pedigree to save yourself a lot of heartache down the road. I plan on using about 90% of what he recommends in this book. I own about six different retriever training books and this is by far the best. BTW if you plan on training anything other than a labrador retriever you may be put off by his obvious prejudice for this breed.



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SSSSSSSSSSSSSS!!!!

Snakes scare the crap out of most people! There is just something about the sight of a slithering, coiled, or rattling reptile that makes one's skin crawl. One day while jogging in Baltimore Counties Oregon Ridge Park, I saw a long branch in the trail. Before I knew it, I had stepped onto the branch which was actually a six foot long Black Snake! I quickly screamed like a little girl while doing my "Scared of a Snake" dance.

Though snakes can be dangerous, they are an exaggerated risk. Only 2 snakes in our area are venomous. The Northern Copperhead and Timber Rattlesnake inhabit remote rocky, wooded areas. They can be easily found intentionally but are otherwise rarely seen.

The other day I had a close encounter with a Copperhead along the Gunpowder River watershed. This huge specimen was sunning on a flat rock next to the trail. Initially, I was startled at the sight of a SNAKE! Once I realized I wasn't going to die, I took a closer look at the slithering critter.

Copperheads are amazingly beautiful. Their colors are a great example of Nature's Camouflage. This two "footer", was actually darker than others I have seen. The snake's eyes were cloudy indicating that it was about to shed its skin. This observation showed me that I shouldn't mess with a snake in this irritable phase.

Snakes do not want to waste venom on something they can't eat. Their food of mice, chipmunks, rats, and birds is secured by a paralyzing bite. The primary ingredient in venom is digestive juice which starts the breakdown of the meal immediately. Often times, snake bite victims receive a Dry Bite which contains no venom. All snakes can bite and even draw blood. Many of the rodents eaten



by snakes carry Lyme's disease ticks, fleas, and other parasites that humans can deal without.

I have only ever seen a few Rattlesnakes in the eastern US. In Montana, I have seen hundreds of them. On one occasion, I ran out of ammo shooting rattlers that were huge and angry. These snakes were from a nearby den next to a trout stream that I was fishing.

The landowner would only grant permission to fish if I promised to shoot any Rattlesnake I encountered. Normally, I would see only a few rattlers that were quickly slithering away from me.

On this day, I was hiking out of the canyon along a game trail and ended up surrounded by aggressive, shedding Rattlers. My handguns snake loads were just what was needed until I emptied the revolver 4 times at very close range! Now out of ammo, I bushwhacked back to the creek. The singing Rattlers were everywhere. They were even swimming across the creek. The fishing was well worth the adventure.

The average outdoorsmen may never encounter a venomous snake. Your dogs and cats may have a different risk. Their curiosity may place them within striking distance of a snake. Most bites are to the nose or face. Snake vaccine is available from your vet. It is also a good idea to be aware of any local Emergency Vet Hospitals in your area if needed.

Be Snake Aware when exploring their habitat. Watch your step and think about where you place your hands. Snakes tend to be around rocks and cover. If you encounter a snake, there is almost always plenty of time to back off and avoid an encounter. Rattlesnakes will warn you of their location when you get close. This Buzzing sound is unmistakable. You can tell a venomous snake by the Heart shaped head. If you are not sure, caution on the safe side and assume it is. Back-off and try another route. Most snake bite victims, pester or try to catch the snake. This game is best left to professionals.

Common sense is always a good tool to use when trekking outdoors. Once you are done doing your little "scared of a snake dance", take a moment to enjoy another marvel of nature. Education is the best way to protect our children and pets.

*Be Snake Aware,
Montana Grant*



Tanner Mcvay with an opening day Whitetail bagged in Calvert County last year. Photo courtesy of Ron's Bay Pro Shop.



Frank Ashe with his 22.5 lb. Turkey sporting a 10 inch beard. Photo courtesy of Clyde's Sport Shop.

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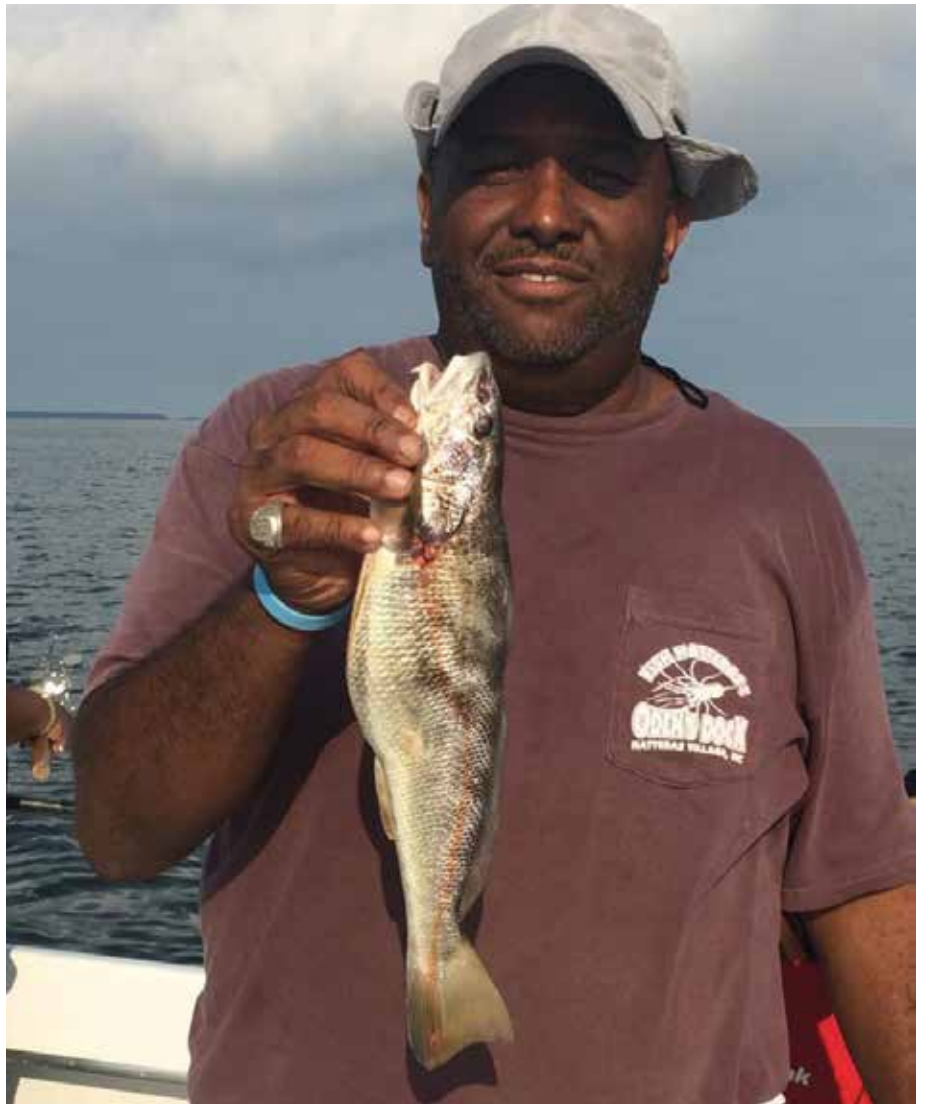
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This shark was caught last month out of the surf at Assateague, Va.



Capt Rich Watts Team, the "Bite Me" with a 50 inch black drum. out of Wachapreague, Va.



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By Grant Soukup

“Montana Grant”

Ticked Off!



SO I take my dog to the vet for her annual checkup and guess what? Lyme’s disease! We made sure that we used the Flea and Tick repellent, groomed and checked for ticks, but “Shellby”, our 2 year old pointer-retriever mix, will need antibiotics for a month! I have yet to take our German Shorthair, “Magnum”, in for his checkup. The vet bills are piling up!

Maryland and the surrounding states are “Tick Central” for getting Lyme’s Disease! Like it or not, we are in the core area to get infected. The disease was named after Lyme, Ct, where it was first identified in 1975. It is a bacterial disease transmitted by infected “Deer Ticks”. The prime infection opportunity occurs when the tiny, pin head size, Deer Ticks are in their nymphal stage, usually May through July. The risk actually exists any time that ticks are active.

Ironically, the “Deer Ticks” are most commonly found on “Field or Deer Mice”, shrews, and birds which serve as the reservoirs of the Lyme’s Bacteria. These mice are unaffected by the disease but can carry 50-100 Deer Ticks! Not all ticks carry the infection. “Deer Ticks” were rare in the United States until the 1960’s when they showed up thanks to migrating birds. Ironically, these “Deer ticks” have nothing to do with Deer! Ticks are the vector of the disease which is transferred between animals and humans. There are also several species of tick’s now which carry the “spirochetes” bacteria which live in the tick’s mouth.

All active outdoorsmen and pet owners need to be aware of the symptoms and precautions needed to deal with outcomes of tick bites. You can obtain an abundance of

current information using computer searches or available publications from wildlife and health agencies.

The only way to prevent the disease is to prevent the tick bite. Use a decent tick repellent that contains safe amounts of DEET when in areas infested with active tick populations. Light colored clothing allows you to see the “hitch-hiking” ticks more easily. Longer sleeves, pants, and socks treated with a repellent, are helpful. Tucking your pants into your boots or socks is also a good idea. Frequently do body checks to locate ticks on your skin. Check your pets as well since they can carry the ticks indoors and can become infected as well.

Deer ticks are so tiny that they may go undetected. Most infected humans don’t remember being bitten by a tick. If you do locate an attached tick, use tweezers to grasp the ticks head as close to the skin as possible. Pull straight up and treat the bite site with an antiseptic. It is important to retrieve the head since the bacteria lives in the tick’s mouth.

The old trick, about using a hot match head, or Vaseline are not good ideas. They cause the tick to back out of your skin but also cause the tick to vomit. This means that the bacteria found in their mouth is now in your skin.

There are some vaccines but they are not 100% effective in humans or pets. Booster shots are required and there are some side effects. It is estimated that over half of our dogs are infected and show no symptoms. Severe, untreated cases can cause permanent disability. Arthritis, lameness, kidney disease, and cardiac issues

are just a few outcomes.

Lyme’s disease is hard to diagnose. A blood test is needed to identify an infection. Most pets will show no symptoms of the Lyme’s infection until their annual check- up. That is how “Shellby” was diagnosed.

Now we will need to prescribe an oral antibiotic such as doxycycline, amoxicillin, or other treatment. Usually a dose of 10-13 days is needed to address the infection. The Lyme’s disease will go into remission but may not be illuminated completely. The dormant bacteria can resurface and cause future infections. It is also possible to get Lyme’s disease multiple times. Once diagnosed with the disease, a vaccine is not effective. Instead, it is important to be diligent and maintain regular health care visits. Some Vets do not address Lyme’s Disease in dogs unless there are



other symptoms present.

There is still much research being done on Lyme’s disease. Keep in mind that the ticks also carry several other bacteria and parasites that can cause other diseases such as “Babesiosis” which is actually more common than Lyme’s Disease. Symptoms are so similar that a blood smear test is needed to distinguish them apart. Treatment is also very different.

If the disease is properly diagnosed quickly, the antibiotics will address the bacterial infection. The signs and symptoms are similar to other illnesses. The telltale sign on humans is a “bull’s-eye rash” at the bite site from 3-30 days after the tick bites you. Joints will ache and swell along with flu-like

symptoms and fatigue. Dogs may become lethargic and lame. Worst case scenarios can result in fatal heart, kidney, or nervous system damage.

There are some ways to improve the environment to minimize tick interaction. Keep your grass, brush, and landscape pruned and mowed. Fencing will prevent other neighborhood critters from bringing infected ticks into your space. Ticks do not crawl. Instead they will wait on plants with their front legs extended so they can hitch-hike onto a host. Treating your property with a tick killing garden insecticide will illuminate most ticks. Choose a dry, rainless window of at least a week to apply the spray. It is also a good idea to address mice and other critters that may carry the infected ticks to your pets.

Pet Flea and Tick collars can be prescribed by your Vet. Be careful to not be cheap here. Many over the counter products have many side effects. Chewable tablets are available which facilitates complete coverage of your pet. You may also want to look into some of the Homeopathic alternatives available.

If you think you or your dog have Lyme’s disease, call your Doctor or Vet. Not everything about this disease is known, but they will have the most current information available. Every case is a bit different and needs professional experience. It is always important to Google any questions that you may have. Information is perhaps the best tool we have when making important decisions about our pets, families, and lives.

Become “Ticked Off”! For now, it is important to take preventative measures and become more aware of the signs and symptoms of Lyme’s disease. Like it or not, we live in a place where this is necessary. Ignorance to the disease is a much worse alternative.

Be the best pet owner you can be!

Montana Grant



Tommy Perry and his crew had Keith Puller in an epic battle of one hour and five minutes to land this 267 lb. Big Eye from the Washington Canyon aboard ‘The Jenny Poo’ to take top honors in the Canyon Kickoff, the Big Eye was worth 9,750.00.



Coastal Report

By Capt. Mark Sampson

No matter how much you plan ahead and try and do the right thing, if you're zipping around the inshore waters it's easy to get a little off your planned course and suddenly find yourself worrying about whether or not you're headed towards water that's measured in "feet" or mere "inches." At times like that it's tough to know whether to slow down and hope you don't bump as you come off plane, maintain course and speed and hope for the best, or throw her into a big u-turn and get your butt back to where you know the water is deep enough. Any of those could be the right call at the time but it all depends upon how you "read the water."

Being able to read the water refers to the ability to look at the surface discern what is going on beneath it. The depth, the edges of channels and shoals, currents, tides, the presence of fish or other marine life, the location of rocks, reefs, or wrecks, there's so much that can be figured out if someone knows how to interpret the sometimes subtle - sometimes obvious features of the water. But for now I'll just stick to what might indicate a change of depth.

Ripples on the water: Even when there is absolutely "zero" wind, and most of the bay is glassy calm, there will usually be patches of

rippled water which might result from a number of conditions such as a small and localized breath of wind or even a school of fish, but it can also be from a where the current is flowing across some shallow water. But then again, the same can hold true for an unusually calm bit of water which might be from any number of things including the presence of extra shallow depths, particularly if there is any kind of vegetation (seaweed) growing there.

Color change: There's noting like cruising the bay on a sunny, calm day when the water is clear and the sun is at your back. Under those conditions the sandy shoals and deeper channels can contrast each other like the strips on a zebra. Unfortunately the water's not always that clear, and if you have a surface chop or cloud cover it be all the more difficult to see bottom. But even under less than ideal conditions, with the aid of a good pair of polarized sunglasses different shades of color can often be picked out enough to tell a boater that there is some kind of a depth change coming up that they might need to avoid.

Different size waves: As wind driven waves move across a body of water they usually stay the same height and distance apart as long as everything else stays constant. But just like we see on the beach, when waves move into shallow water they get steeper, closer together and will often break. Such differences in wave characteristics are a good indicator of shallow water.

Weed or trash lines: Offshore anglers are familiar with weed-lines or even trash-lines where wind and/or currents push together long lines of floating debris. The same can sometimes happen in the inshore waters when a breeze pushes debris up against a current that's ripping around a shoal.

Anytime boaters notice even small amounts of trash or grass drifting in a line they should be suspicious of a change of depth on either side.

Upwellings: When moving water is pushed against an underwater obstruction such as a shoal, a wreck, or a rock, it will move over and around whatever is in its path. If the current

is strong enough and the water shallow enough, water that is pushed over the obstruction will often go straight up to the surface in a plume known as an "upwelling." Though upwellings will not always indicate a hazard to navigation, they do always indicate that there is some kind of change of depth or bottom structure and boaters had should be very careful about crossing over them.

Crab traps: Wire crab traps or "pots" stand about 20-inches high and have floats that mark their location. The traps are usually set out from a boat as it moves along in one direction.



Seeing a string of pots doesn't necessarily mean that the water there is particularly deep, but the boats that put them out are usually fairly good size and as long as the traps themselves aren't visible above the water, those in small boats can at least be reassured to know that the water is at least 20-inches deep or more around the floats.

Sea birds: Birds can give hints to the depth but their actions require a lot of interpretation. Birds will often dive on bait at the edge of bar. But diving birds don't always mean deep water is near because some birds like the little terns will often dive on bait even in very shallow water. Birds tend to float in water that at least have a little bit of depth to it but before someone runs close to any floating birds they had better make sure they're swimming and not standing!

Sooner or later every boater is going to find themselves in at least a few inches of water lees that their boat actually drafts and they will officially be "stuck" or at least churning up bottom a lot ore than they care to be. How to get "unstuck" is something everyone who drives a boat needs to know, but perhaps even more important is the ability to stay out of water that's too shallow in the first place.

The ability to read the water is not something can be learned from a book or a 15-minute instructional video. Those who are good at it will probably admit that their talent is the end result of experience, intuition, and a lot of bent propellers!

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Melissa Cawood with a very nice 10 point Buck. Photo courtesy of Wink's Sporting Goods.

SPANNING THE GLOBE....

Bowfisherman Arrows World-Record Mako Shark

A bowfisherman landed his name in the record book this month after taking a 544-pound mako shark off the coast of Southern California.

Patrick Eger, host of Big E TV and owner of Big E Outfitters, shot the 10.5-foot predator off Catalina Island on June 15. The 47 year old explained his record breaking take to the Wausau Daily Herald.

"The mako is a very aggressive shark," Eger told the newspaper. "They are not afraid of anything. He came in to where the chum is coming from and starts hitting the boat, ramming the boat, sizing up the boat."

Eger took the leviathan with a broadhead attached to a rod and reel via 200-pound test line.

"Unlike a lot of ocean fishing, there's no chair and you're not strapped into anything," Eger said. "I stood the entire time, and the only thing I was strapped to was the pole. If the shark pulls anything in, he's pulling the pole and myself in."

The battle took more than two hours. Eger's fiancée, Cheryl Mabry, who

was onboard to film the adventure added, "The most exciting part of the whole thing was actually watching that thing jump. He jumped about eight, nine feet up in the air, twirled in the air, then jumped again."

Eger's shark officially weighed 544 pounds, 8 ounces. The previous bow and arrow record for a shark was set in 1997 in Florida, on the books with the Bowfishing Association of America. That fish weighed in at 233 pounds, which Eger's catch more than doubled.



Layla Schroyer with her first fish. Photo courtesy of Clyde's Sport Shop.



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By Steve Huettner

“The last word”

News on the Fowl Front

Snow geese, brant, a long list of dabbling ducks, divers on the open water, and sea ducks on the Chesapeake.

Waterfowlers (roughly 30,000) tend to be an optimistic bunch because if you weren't there is no way a sane person would hunt waterfowl. If one thinks about all the factors that need to happen for a bird to find their way to your spread its amazing we even pull the trigger. As we enjoy the lazy days of summer, bushels of crabs (if you can afford them) and a cold one; biologists are busy trying to figure out bag limits, seasons dates, lengths and how the overall 2014-15 season might shape up.

The Federal Duck stamp may be getting a raise in price; and thus the places that ducks, geese and other critters enjoy could get a boost. The current

price (\$15) has not seen a raise since 1991 (24 years ago) when gas was \$1.18 a gallon and a stamp was 29 cents. There is currently a bipartisan bill in the Congress to raise it \$25

and before the government waste block starts yelling, realize that 98 cents of every dollar goes to conserve wetland and associated habitats. Let's also realize that Congress has failed to pass an increase previously and seems to be happy doing nothing (heaven forbid the other guy get credit for doing something). Since the program began in 1934, the duck stamp has raised \$900 million dollars and conserved 6 million acres of habitat. 24 years without a raise seems like a long enough time without a raise. Land and the cost of doing business have not gotten a cheaper, so it's time to give the fowl and Mother Nature a raise.

One of the most anticipated and discussed report for Maryland hunters is the Survey of Atlantic Population Geese. Every spring biologists perform aerial surveys in Northern Quebec (the primary nesting ground for Atlantic Flyway Geese). The primary nesting areas are along the coastal bays of Ungava and Hudson Bay. The numbers gathered during this surveys help form the basis for the AP goose hunting season. From June 11-22 data was gathered which indicated favorable nesting conditions. The amount of nesting pairs was 183,642

which were similar to the 2012 estimate of 190,340 pairs (there was no survey in 2013 due to aircraft unavailability. So based on the current number and previous history the upcoming season should see some birds.

Snow geese numbers over the last decade have increased to the point where snow geese were destroying their breeding habitat (not to mention the crops of farmers in the United States). The population at times was in excess of one million birds. The problem was deemed so serious that special conservation measures were enacted by the USFWS (unplugged guns, electronic calls, no bag limit etc.). According to the numbers provided by the Canadian Wildlife Service the liberal hunting regulations may be doing what they were in intended to, decreasing the amount of snow geese. 2012 saw over one million birds, 2013 920,000 birds, and 2014 saw it decrease to 796,000 birds (a 200,000 decrease). Moving forward it will be interesting to see if the USFWS keeps the spring conservation season intact or modifies it.

Finally, based on the Harvest Information Program (HIP) provides a snapshot of those that hunted waterfowl in Maryland last year. 15,400 of us hunted ducks, hunting 75,000 days



and averaging about 8 ducks. When broken down this translates to each duck hunter chasing ducks 5 days out of the season and taking 8 ducks with a season total harvest of 133,000 ducks. Sea Duck hunters are a smaller subset of 2,700, averaged about 3 days of hunting and averaging 5 sea ducks for those 3 hunts. Goose hunters account for 21,800 nirods that averaged 6 days afield and killed 8 geese for season total harvest of 152,000 geese (resident and non-resident).

This snapshot shows that water fowlers are truly an optimistic bunch that is willing to put in the time and invest the money for a chance at a few birds.



John Brown IV, Delaney and Mitchell Quillen, Zachary Quillen and Eric Price had their hands full with these stripers taken aboard the 'Catch 22'.



Justin Ashe with his first Trophy Rockfish that was 40 inches. Photo courtesy of Clyde's Sport Shop.

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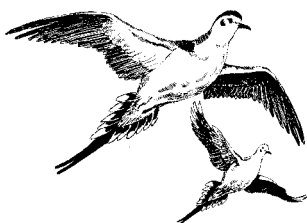


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