

# Fishing & Hunting

Journal



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Captain Kevin Cummings and first mate Maria with two nice rockfish caught off the My Maria out of Tilghman Island. - On the right is her Fresh caught Rockasaurus!



Amanda Plummer of Rock Hall, Md. with a nice Jake.

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## “Hooked on Fishing” The Oceanic Night Bite

By Lenny Rudow  
Staying offshore overnight is an unreal experience. The ocean comes alive with critters we don't usually see next to the boat, ranging from squid to flying fish to tunas. They dart through the lights—you've gotta have lights, but more on that later—and engage in a night-time feeding frenzy that often puts the daylight bite to shame. Want to get in on the action? Here are the basics.



Mike Vancamp shows off a chunky yellowfin, taken on the chunk at night.

**LIGHTS:** As stated, you've gotta have lights, because they're what make you stand out in the inky dark waters to attract the predators and prey alike. While all lights work to some degree, green lights are the best, period. During a series of overnights one season I tried fishing one side of the boat in one color and the other side in another (including white, pink, blue, and green), and green consistently held the lion's share of the action.

Most of us don't have built-in underwater lights, but this is easily remedied with a Hydroglow. Sure, a Hydroglow costs a couple hundred bucks. But that's not even as much as you'll spend on fuel for a single offshore trip, and it lasts for years and years. The investment is well worth it.

**BAITS:** Though trolling is occasionally attempted at night, chunking on the drift is far more common. To keep up a steady supply of chunks all night you'll want two flats of butterfish. The butters work fine for baits, too, but last year sardines clearly out-fished butterfish baits, for some reason. Squid are also good bait, especially if you catch them on the scene, and live-line them.

All you need to catch squid is a set of squid jigs, which have a sharp basket on the end instead of a hook. The squid's tentacles get tangled in the basket, and you crank 'em in then invert the basket to get the squid off. Be prepared for a mess; they will squirt ink all over the place. Slide a hook through the tip of their mantle to live-line them, toss a few extras in the livewell, and beyond that fill the cooler for calamari—the squid we catch off Delmarva are as good as any when breaded and fried.

**TACKLE:** You'll want to use your regular tuna-sized gear for tuna, and set out 80-pound class gear if you want to try and hook a swordfish. (Bait with a whole pre-rigged squid, the bigger the better, for swords). One note: the past two seasons there were plenty of smallish yellowfin around at night. Daylight anglers caught few of them but in the dark, they came on strong. These fish utterly refused to eat anything tied onto leader larger than 30-pound test, and also showed a clear preference for small baits fished on small hooks.

Be sure to bring along a couple of 20-pound spinning set-ups, too. Quite often you'll be flocked by bonito and mahi, and catching them on a spinner is a ball. Also remember to pack at least one or two shark rigs. Sharks are another common visitor at night, and although most will be blues, mako do make an appearance now and again. Finally, be sure to stock up on hooks, leader, swivels, and the like. Most guys mix an overnights with an afternoon of fishing prior and a morning of fishing after, and in a stretch that long, you're likely to go through quite a bit of gear.

**OTHER GEAR:** Obviously, everyone aboard will want to have a flashlight. Strap-on headlamps are best. You'll also want to grab a few packs of cyalume light sticks. Yes, these should be attached to sword lines (about 15' from the bait) but more importantly, everyone aboard should tie one to a belt loop or life jacket. That way, if anyone goes into the drink they'll have illumination close at hand and will be much easier to locate.

And about those life jackets—if ever there's a time for the entire crew to wear them, fishing at night is it. Inflatable belts are my choice because

they're comfortable and unobtrusive, but any USCG approved PFD will do the trick. Some other additional safety gear you should have for an overnights includes an electronic signaling device (EPIRB, satellite messenger, or PLB), a waterproof strobe, and for gosh sakes, a properly working DSC VHF radio. These days plenty of boats overnights offshore, and if you make a general call as it gets dark to touch base with the other guys out there, everyone is usually quite happy to stay in touch. Knowing there's a fellow fishermen close by in case of trouble is a comforting feeling on the open ocean at night. Beyond these things, one more is necessary



**Note the battery sitting on deck; unless your boat has gobs of juice, it's a good idea to bring an extra to power the lights, rather than risk running down the boat's batteries.**

for a safe overnights offshore: good judgment. You need a savvy and safe captain. You have to plan a trip like this knowing that (unless you're in a 50-footer) at the first hint of high winds or bad weather, it MUST be cancelled.

Get the right gear, make the right decisions, and leave the inlet with solid preparation and a little bit of fishing know-how, and an overnights offshore can be a magical experience—one that few forms of fishing will ever match.

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# Fishing & Hunting Journal

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## FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

A Word from Pastor:

In his book "Success, Motivation and the Scriptures," William H. Cook puts the matter of prosperity into focus. He says, "A right definition of success is important from two sides – from the side of having God in it and from the side of having achievement in it.

"Defining success without having God in the definition leaves man without the blessings of God upon his life. Yet having God in the life and still not achieving is adding insult to the infinite.

God knows more about success than man does, more about man's need than man does, more about goal-setting than man does, more about inner confidence than man does, more about power than man does and more about planning life than man does."

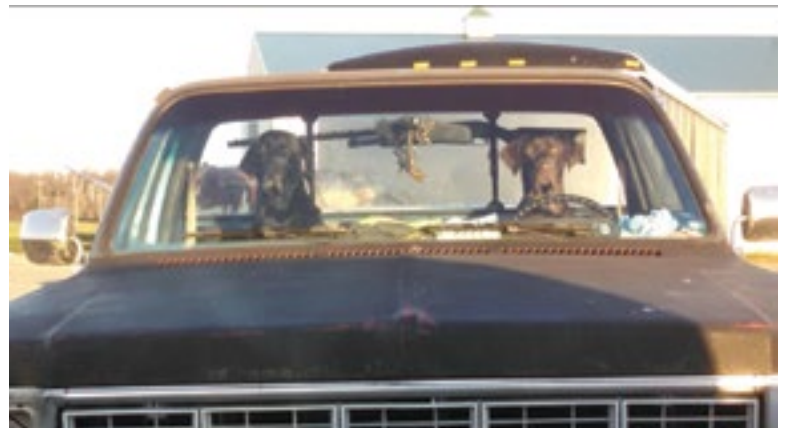
Since God knows all those things and provides the very route to our success, isn't it incredible that we would leave Him out of our plans? In Psalms Chapter 1, the psalmist tells us that the man who includes God in his thinking will prosper.

These are uncertain times, especially for Americans. Many people these days have time for meetings, seminars, and "how to" clubs, but no time for the Bible and no time for church. Yet they complain when all goes wrong. Let's look to God, follow his plan, and we will be prosperous – in his way.

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

— MEL BRINDLEY

Pastor  
Chestertown, Md., Baptist Church



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3:10PM	Remington 870 Express 12GA WD/Blu	5:50PM	Franchi Affinity 12GA Camo
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## “Tackle Box Tim”

### Catching Bass Through the Spawning Stages

There is a common theme amongst bass fishermen that states that bass have two purposes in life – eating and to spawning. These two life functions are not more prevalent than in the month of May in our tidal waters. Some bass will be firmly entrenched in the reproduction process, others will be staging to move into spawning areas. Some may have spawned early and will have moved off of the beds. The pre- and post-spawn bass are looking to feed, while the bedding bass are geared to protect their eggs and fry. In any of these cycles, bass are willing to strike.

Prespawn bass are likely the easiest to catch. They are eagerly feeding to build up reserves before taking on the tasks of fanning beds, vigorous reproduction, and defending the nest. Most prespawn areas are near spawning haunts. As the upper bay fishery is so expansive, the previous statement is quite generic. The grass beds of the Susquehanna Flats are a great place to start. Both sides of the flats can be good. The aquatic vegetation varies from year to year; however, you can count on grass along the back channel on the Harford County side. Also look for vegetation along the north channel between Poplar and Carpenter Points. Don't overlook the areas leading into marinas in Havre de Grace and in the

North East River.

The prespawn feed will also be going on in Middle River. Yes, there was a fish kill here last fall;

but the area is vast and has a population of quality spawning size bass. Look for the bite to happen at the points leading into the outer creeks since the fish kill occurred from Norman Creek back. The points leading into Hogpen, Sue, Gallaway, and Stansbury

Creeks are good places to start.

The lures of choice for the prespawn will vary amongst anglers. Yet there is a small set of “go to” baits. I know I will have a spinnerbait, a rattle trap, and a square bill crankbait tied to cover water around grass beds and shoreline cover. For slower presentations I'll cast a jig and a stick worm around sunken trees and rocks.

Fishing for spawning bass in a tidewater environment is much different than in lakes. The primary reason is water clarity. You will hear the term “sight fishing” if you watch footage of tournaments held during the spawn. Here, the pros can actually see the bass they are fishing for. In our tidal waters, there is always a stain to the water that makes sight fishing difficult if not impossible.

There are specific areas where you can find bedding bass without being able to see them. Prime spawning areas are out of the flow of tidal current. These areas are in the back of feeder creeks and coves. Bass fan their beds on hard bottom structure. Gravel banks are key areas. If there is secondary cover like a log, sporadic rock, or grass, the spot is even better. Many of the marinas on the North East River and in Havre de Grace are also renowned spawning areas. In Middle River, look for docks in the backs of the creeks. Those with multiple-piling supports and docks that have been built over the remains of

old piers are good choices as well.

There are a few aspects about spawning bass that are true anywhere you fish for them. If something comes on to the bed that doesn't belong, the bass will readily remove it. The strike will not be fierce and the bass may not get the hook. It is only when you've perturbed the bass enough that it will strike it hard. It's easy to tell this difference in clear water lakes than in stained tidal water.

A bass will not roam from the bed to feed. Slow presentations with soft baits are best. Most anglers choose a Texas-rigged lizard, creature bait, or tube for crawling through a bed. Others like to entice a bass with the slow fall of a stick worm

or soft jerkbait. Some fishermen will even work topwater baits around spawning areas. A popper or spook slowly twitched along presents a quick dash and grab scenario for a bedsitting bass.

There are two sides to fishing for spawning bass. It does present an opportunity to catch a bass of a lifetime. Yet, disturbing the reproduction ritual can have negative effects on future populations. Catch and release is best. Have a camera ready to get your hero picture and quickly get the bass back to the bed.

The first few days after a spawning stages can be tough. The females leave the bed for the closest piece of cover or structural contour to rest. When the need to rest is overcome by the need to feed, the bite gets much better. Look for patches of grass, long dead falls, and the first drop off away from a bedding area. In Middle River, simply move out to the deep end of piers where bass have spawned. They will be farther out in the current looking for tidal flow to flush and flood their meals past the outer pilings.

The same set of lures that are used during the first two spawning stages are still in play. A big jig or creature bait pitched to cover resembles a sizable meal. Crankbaits and spinnerbaits worked slowly are also good. This is certainly a great time to cast surface plugs. Focus your casts around the deep ends of sunken wood. Work the edges of grass beds and don't overlook sporadic patches of vegetation, especially if they are closest to spawning banks. If you need a slow presentation, nothing beats a stick worm – Texas rigged or wacky rigged.

May is the month for following bass through the three spawning stages. You'll have several locations and presentations throughout the month. The challenge is figuring out which stage of the spawn that most of the bass are in. I am looking forward to that challenge. How about you?



Tackle Box Tim landed this bass from the outer pilings of a pier in Middle River.



Lewin Blackiston, IV with his Gobbler. 19.5 lbs., 10 inch beard, 1 inch spurs Taken in Queen Anne's Co.

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# Tom Turkey meets Mr. Johnson. ..... lesson learned

Let me start by saying I am a novice turkey hunter. I have been chasing whitetail deer and waterfowl for 40 years or so but only recently began pursuing longbeards. For years, other hunters told me of the excitement and enjoyment of turkey hunting and my response was always the same, I was afraid to try it for fear I would like it and all I needed was something else to chase around the woods, just ask my wife.

Things began to change about 10 years ago or so when numbers of

turkeys began to show up from time to time on the farm we leased in Kent County, Maryland. As the population of birds continued to increase, we heard others were hunting them in the area so in 2014 I decided to take the plunge. A friend and hunting club member JJ Grauer was an experienced gobbler chaser and agreed to show me the ropes.

We met at the farm on the first Saturday of the season for my inaugural hunt. The day was fairly slow with a few gobblers heard in the distance at first light, around 11:35 things picked up and I was able to score with a nice size Tom before the Maryland 12:00 mandatory quitting time. I was hooked.

It wasn't long before I was on the internet watching Youtube videos and ordering a few calls and a decoy. When I told others the story of whacking a bird on my first ever turkey hunt, several experienced hunters suggested that I use my head and go ahead and quit, you know, while I was ahead.

But, as most other long time gobbler tracking addicts will tell you, that wasn't going to happen.

I gobbled up (pun intended) all of the tips and information I could get my hands on during the next year as I awaited the 2015 season. Finally, opening Saturday arrived which found the mentor and protégée, JJ and I back in the turkey woods but this time we were skunked, but this result would never be enough to deter me. The next weekend, JJ had to work so I planned to give it a go by myself. After all, what did I have to lose, a trip to the turkey woods sure sounded a lot better than spending my Saturday morning doing springtime yard work and working on avoiding my honey-do list.

Once again, in the closing minutes (11:45), I was able to close the deal on a nice gobbler, even flying solo. Dumb beginners luck was my only excuse, but believe me when I tell you this, I was not complaining. A few return trips that year yielded more

typical results which only prompted me to work harder in my quest for knowledge about these wary birds. I am continually amazed at what folks post on Youtube giving instruction and relating their experience on just about anything and turkey hunting is no exception. I have worked on my calling so much, my wife Jo has threatened to chuck my hunting gear out on the street. Although this admonishment only prompted me to most times wait until she was out of the house before working on my calling techniques. My slate call took up a permanent off season spot on my computer desk, like I said earlier, I was hooked.

For 2016, JJ and I decided we would hunt the opener which fell this year on a Monday morning. The weather was looking good and the anticipation built. Due to previous commitments, plans to head to the farm the night before to roost the birds never materialized. We arrived on site early and as we dressed for the hunt, we laid out the mornings plan and strategy. This year, it was decided, JJ would get the first crack if we had Tom come within range. I would handle the close in calling if needed so that JJ could concentrate on his shot and reduce his movements.

Light was just starting to creep into the eastern sky as we made final preparations to walk to our spot when we heard a gobbler off in the distance. This was followed shortly by another call from the complete opposite direction. On the walk in, gobblers were being heard from all points of the compass and various distances from our location, this was gonna be a good day, or so it seemed.

From legal shooting time on, it seemed there was never a dull moment, we heard gobblers and hens calling most of the morning, saw a few Toms just out of range and had a Jake give our decoy a look-see. It seemed we just couldn't close the deal, but on the entertainment/enjoyment/excitement gauge, this hunt was already quickly moving to the top of the list for my agreeably short turkey hunting resume.

It was our third set of the morning and the time was getting short. We had a gobbler occasionally responding to our calls from the other side of a nearby road but just couldn't get him to join us in our woods. It seemed he varied from between 100 to 250 yards away, the clock was ticking.

For me, I use a 5 gallon bucket swivel top seat to hunt from. I like the freedom it gives me to switch positions and viewing directions fairly easily. It was 11:25, my legs were getting a bit stiff and I had to answer the standing call of nature once again due to the several cups of coffee I had consumed that morning since leaving home at 2:30 AM. Things were slow, it had been about 5-10 minutes since we heard anything from the turkey we had been talking to off in the distance for the past 45 minutes or so. The time was right for me to stretch my legs and take a quick leak, or so I thought.

I lifted my 60 year old bones up off my seat, stretched my legs which were slightly cramped as a result of spending



**Olivia and Jacob Gagalski are a tough brother and sister act to follow. Both with nice looking Jakes.**



the past 5 ½ hours seated on top of a 5 gallon bucket. Even though the seat is padded, the angle of your legs while seated does result on some minor cramping as it is a position you do not normally find yourself for extended periods of time. I took about 10 steps to the west, out and away from the blow-down I was using as cover, I unzipped my coveralls and jeans to begin the search for the ever elusive Mr. Johnson when JJ made another soft series of hen yelps just like he had been doing all morning.

Mr. Johnson had been successfully located and was just about to begin his requested task when from the direction of the hard road and what seemed to be about only 50 yards away, came the thundering sound of what sounded to me like twin gobblers. I froze, Johnson returned to hiding on his own, luckily, he had yet begin his designed duty. My eyes searched in the direction of the calls but were unable to locate their source. Finally, I got a glimpse of a wing, and then another head, there were two of them and they were coming in, closing the gap from them and our decoy in a hurry. They were still in some thick cover and were quickly gone from my view once again. I glanced at JJ without moving my head and could tell he had seen them too. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see my gun and call on a log about 10 feet away, it might as well have been 10 miles.

Admittedly, my brain, which was operating on not enough sleep and probably too much caffeine, was working a bit slow at the time as I surveyed my options. I was out in the open; I had no weapon, no call, and was in a position, in my mind, to blow the shot for my mentor. This wasn't going to happen if I could help it, at that moment and while the two birds were in the thick and not visible to me, I eased down to the ground behind the blow-down and completely

out of their field of view.

I will admit, the thought about doing the belly crawl back to my gun did briefly occur to me but was quickly ruled out as I didn't think there was time and thought the noise that would be made would not help my buddy in his quest. In the back of my mind, I was glad I stayed put. Instead of being treated to the strutting gobbler show which was occurring less than 20 yards from me, I was staring a bed of leaves not 10 inches from my face, not the way I had hoped it would be.

Kaboom...JJ took the shot, I saw him spring to his feet as I also stood up at looked in the direction I had last saw the birds. There, I could see two Toms standing looking towards the two slightly rotund humans which had just materialized out of nowhere still trying to process the sight of the non-moving plastic hen with the stake up her bottom, the loud report they just heard as well as what they were currently seeing in the form of JJ and I. Leaning my frame in the direction of my gun prompted the two remaining confused, ear rung and befuddled birds to vacate the area post haste. Turns out, there were a total of 3 which came in, with only 2 leaving; JJ had scored, for which I was extremely happy. I was only slightly disappointed I didn't get to watch as the events unfolded, but that feeling didn't last.

The upside of my day in addition to JJ taking his bird was I was able to add another tidbit of turkey hunting experience to my admittedly limited bank of knowledge, although I seriously doubt I will be recording a Youtube video on the topic anytime soon. I am, however, willing to share this morsel of info with you the reader, just please remember where you heard it and give me credit when and if the factoid goes viral.....

So here goes....when chasing Tom Turkey and it becomes necessary for Mr. Johnson to make an appearance, it is probably a good idea to take along Mr. Remington just in case, as things in the spring turkey woods can heat up and happen in quite a hurry. Take it from me, a guy who learned the hard way.

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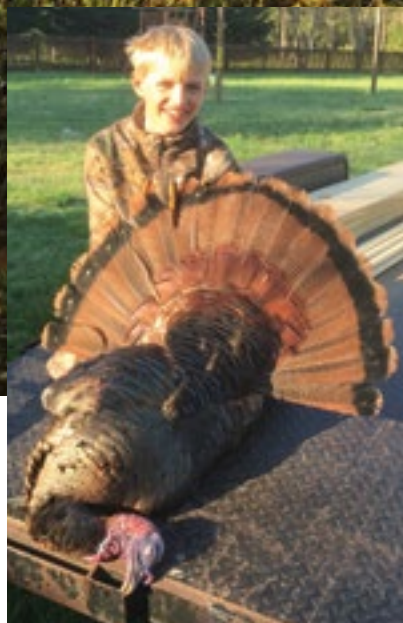
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**Eastern Shore Gobbler harvested by Aaron Mullis of Odenton, MD on opening day 4-18-2016 10" beard 1 1/2" spurs.**





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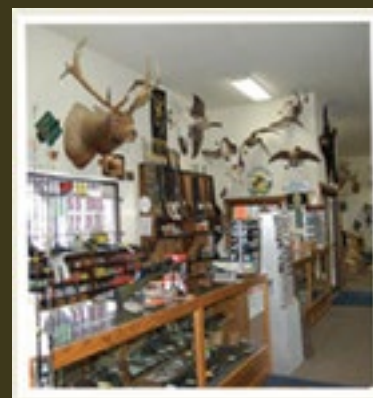
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## Charles County Man Convicted of Dumping; Two Turkey Poachers Charged

Two men were charged with baiting turkey and a man was charged with illegally dumping fish and geese last week in separate cases brought by the Maryland Natural Resources Police.

A Charles County man was fined \$1,000 and sentenced to two year's probation Wednesday after he was found guilty of illegal dumping.

Reid Nathaniel Franklin, 22, of Benedict, was charged in February after officers were called to private property where a pile of dead geese and fish were dumped.

Officers thought the fish looked similar to those seen in Franklin's truck on Feb. 3, when he was charged with poaching. They questioned people in the neighborhood and other sources and came to the conclusion he was responsible. When questioned, Franklin acknowledged that he dumped the fish.

Franklin was also found guilty in March in Charles County District Court for failing to have a tidal fish license in relation to the dumping incident.

In a separate incident, Franklin was found guilty in the same court of exceeding the daily bag limit for geese, and hunting without a license and migratory bird stamp, after officers found him and two other hunters with 24 birds. The geese were donated to

charity.

A Pennsylvania man was charged Saturday with hunting over bait after officers on surveillance in Emmitsburg caught him guiding a juvenile who violated several regulations.

During their investigation, the two officers discovered that the youth hunter baited turkeys, had a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, was using improper shot size, did not report his kill and did not record the turkey—a juvenile male, or jake—on his big game hunting record.

Benjamin Francis Miller Sr., 40, of Fairfield, admitted that he and the juvenile had placed bait in the area before the youth hunt day. Officers reminded Miller of his responsibilities as a mentor and issued warnings to the juvenile.

Miller is scheduled to appear in Frederick County District Court on June 2. If found guilty of the baiting charge, he could be fined as much as \$1,500.

In Garrett County, Paul William

Riley, 46, of Oakland, was charged Sunday with hunting turkey over bait.

Officers on patrol noticed shelled corn on the ground and in a feeder within 30 feet of a hunting cabin on Audley Riley Road near Potomac Garrett State Forest.

When they met with Riley and checked the cabin, they found a loaded shotgun and turkey calls near an open window facing the baited area.

Riley is scheduled to appear in Garrett County District Court on June 2. If found guilty, he could be fined as much as \$1,500.

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## “Tuna The Tide”

### Chesapeake Bay May Worms

By Captain Mark Galasso

#### Tuna the Tide Charter Service

Striper fishing in the Chesapeake Bay in May can be one of the most incredible fishing experiences one can have. It can also be one of the most frustrating. Fishing can change from feast to famine overnight and speculation as to the reasons vary widely. The most obvious reason for wide swings of success is the spawn. And when the time is right a Striper drops all interest in feeding and focuses all its attention on the annual spawn. Anyone who has fished the Susquehanna Flats catch and release season knows this all too well.

What is a little less known and harder to time is the mysterious appearance in May, or sometimes early June, of the Mayworm hatch. However, anyone who fishes in the Eastern Bay catch and release zone in May can tell you as soon as the hatch happens.

So let's look at a little Biology to explain what is going on. Let me start by admitting not everything is known about these weird creatures. In the literature they are actually known as marine bristle worms or clam worms. They are loosely related to earthworms but more closely related to the marine polychaete (many hairs) segmented worms like Bloodworms. They can be quite large as in the case of Bloodworms. Adult worms have enlarged parapodia for swimming and digging.



These are the hairs or filaments coming off each segment. Usually two to a segment. Worms are hermaphroditic (both male and female in the same body). There are over 110 different species in Chesapeake Bay. The adults live on the bottom feeding on detritus and plankton. Ironically the larvae are part of the Plankton.

So here is where it gets sexy. When Night crawlers mate they come to the surface on a new moon (Opposite of the full moon) at its darkest. Two worms will come together and exchange sperm and eggs to fertilize each other. In the case of Mayworms it's a little different. They still wait for a new moon when the water temperatures are right. Then they release a sexual form called a heteronereis. This is a small, maybe an inch or two swimming tube of eggs and sperm. It swims to the surface, swims in circles

and exchanges reproductive material with millions of others during several dark nights. The whole event can last as little as two or as much as ten nights depending on environmental factors. The tubes then settle back to the bottom. Just for your planning the New Moon this May was on the 7th.

Putting this new knowledge into practice can be advantageous to our May fishing. Using the Lunar calendar we know that a major spawn will be happening in late May during the full moon. And we will should have a Mayworm hatch either the beginning of May or beginning of June during the New Moon. Since there are other less predictable variables this isn't exact. But if you catch fifty fish one day jigging and the next day you catch two little footballs throwing up a brown wormy goop you know the worm hatch is happening. Time to call the boss back and tell him (or her) you can come back to work this week.

### Fishing Guide 101

**I wrote this to cheer up my Mom who, at the time, had just been diagnosed with breast cancer. I think she got a kick out of it. Unfortunately it's all true. So here goes....**

Dear Mom,

Everyone keeps telling me how lucky I am to be a Charterboat Captain. Getting paid to do the thing I enjoy most in life, catching fish. The joke in our fishing community is ours is the second oldest profession. Obviously the oldest profession is not legal at this time and I don't think I could ever be professional doing something like that anyway. But I digress.

If one could make a fortune getting paid to fish everyone would do it. So I've been told. On those beautiful warm, calm sunny days when the fish are practically jumping into the boat and everyone is happy doing what I do just can't be beat. However, charters like the one I had the other day give me real insight into why everyone isn't doing it.

My day really starts the day before an actual charter. I monitor weather reports. The CBOFS wind vector report is my favorite. It gives detailed wind reports over a 24 hour cycle (now forty eight). It's pretty darn accurate. I also watch the weather channel and call up the NOAA reports for our area. If I haven't fished for a couple of days I call up a few Captains I know to see how and where the fish are biting. It can save me a lot of fuel the next day. And with fuel being more expensive than gold, but not as expensive as bottled water, that's important. The newest

and most accurate fish finder in every captain's arsenal is now a cell phone.

Well the other evening was a typical one. I made my calls and it turned out the fish were biting pretty good. And as a bonus they were biting pretty close to home. I was on the computer at the time so I went to the NOAA website as well as the CBOFS site. A “freshening breeze” was being called for starting just before sunrise. A quick check out the window in my office revealed a star studded sky behind dead still trees. Not a breath of air. I flipped on the weather channel to see what they had to say. I was a bit early for the “Local Weather” so I had to listen to Jim “Fricken” Cantore talk about his experiences in the eye of the latest hurricane. It must have been quite a blow because it looks like it blew all his hair off. When the local weather finally showed “on the Eights” it mentioned a slight drizzle and fog in the morning with light and variable winds out of the east. Sounds good to me. I called my party for the morning and told them it was a go. They questioned the rain a bit but I assured them the boat was covered, the fish were biting and the small amount of rain the experts were calling for was a non-issue. By this time it was 9:00pm and since I had to be up by 5:45am I went to bed.

I don't sleep well the night before a charter. I guess I start to formulate a game plan in my sleep for the next day. It's nice to have a plan but I think a good night's sleep might serve me better. So I spent the rest of this night

routine while the wife kept purring wrapped up in a warm comforter, the cat snuggled next to her half buried face. I jumped in the shower. Cold I might add since the hot water heater only works sometimes, but not this time. Someday I'll fix it. Which is what I thought the last time I took a cold shower. I brushed my teeth and took my morning constitutional (sorry), got dressed and went downstairs. I poured myself some iced tea, took my vitamins and made myself the usual peanut butter and honey sandwich for the road. I went out to the garage to load ice. The sun hadn't come up yet. I tripped over the cat as I walked through the office. She shrieked, but wouldn't get out of my way. I opened the garage door and the cold wet blast hit me like getting zinged with a wet towel. I could see the shadows of the trees dancing across the driveway. HOLY%@\*&!! I expected to see Jim “Fricken” Cantore standing in the spotlight! Puddles of water with whitecaps pockmarked the driveway. I ran back into the house and tried to call my party. NO ANSWER. I remembered they were driving down from Philly and probably left hours ago. Oh well. Nothing to do now but load ice and head for the boat.

I arrived at the boat about twenty minutes later just as the visibility started to improve with the rising sun. Red sky in the morning sailors take warning. What about a black sky? That can't be good. I took the long walk down the short pier. The boat was violently rocking in it's slip.



in that twilight haze one gets into. Some call it a long power nap, others just a restless sleep. So between my five trips to the bathroom, my planning and my listening to the wife snoring let's just say I didn't get much sleep. Though in the wife's defense she says I snore as well. But I can't say I've ever heard it. I'm sure I didn't snore this night since I didn't sleep.

I must have dozed off though because I was awakened by two alarm clocks. I don't trust the electric one so I also set a wind up as a spare just in case the power goes out. It sounds like loud rock music with too much cow bells when the both go off. I can't believe it doesn't wake the wife.

Anyway I went through my normal

The cockpit was full of Seagull Pooh and straw. I think the straw was part of the roof of the Tiki Bar thirty feet away. The Pooh a mixture of partially digested fish and day old bread from the restaurant dumpster next door. Bread that was probably sold for three bucks a slice the day before lay scattered all over my engine box and cockpit floor. Dirty bird feathers were blowing everywhere in the howling wind. I could only wonder if the Gulls got their feast in before the hurricane hit. I loaded my ice and hosed off the mess. Seemed kind of funny at the time, hosing down the boat in a squall. I was already standing in front of nature's pressure washer!

I saw headlights heading toward the

parking lot. It must be my guys since no one else was around. Three cars with Pennsylvania tags and adorned with Eagles stickers. They parked but no one got out. \$\*#! I timed my leap and jumped up on the dock. I walked over to the first car and waited until they rolled down the tinted window. "Hi, you must be my party." I gleefully said. "Hi, you must be nuts." they somberly replied. Yea, sorry. Wouldn't you just like to shoot the weather man. A big burley man in the back popped me the inevitable question. "Is it fishable?" It's funny. Almost anything is fishable if you don't mind danger, intrigue and discomfort. I mean people climb Mount Everest, jump out of airplanes or go into politics for fun. Come on. In fact I usually watch

The Perfect Storm or Deadliest Catch the night before a day like this. It just never seems all that rough the next day. Yeah, it won't be fun but it's fishable I replied. Next thing I know I'm leading a procession of men carrying coolers down the dock weaving in and out of the remaining piles of bird pooh still on the dock. Funny how people over pack for a day on the water. I timed the swells and jumped down into the cockpit. They proceeded to pass me down the coolers. All heavy I might add. I asked what was in the first one. A habit I've acquired to make sure people don't sneak Bananas on board. Beer was the reply. Second cooler. Beer. Third. Beer. Fourth. Beer and Whiskey. Fifth. Beer. Sixth. (The smallest one.) Food. Thank God. Seventh. Hey wait a minute you have to many guys. Oh yeah, sorry, Tim's Uncle Joe decided to come at the last minute. Guys listen I can only take six. Coast Guard regulations. Silence. And by the way, did anyone bring anything to drink other than alcohol? Silence. Finally Uncle Joe broke the silence. "What the #\*\$, no mixers?" I'll stay in the car. That takes care of that I thought. Everyone except Uncle Joe jumped into the boat.

I gathered everyone's attention. Guys, Sorry about Uncle Joe. Just a few notes on safety. Life jackets are underneath the seats in the cabin. Please keep your hands inboard when we are leaving or coming into the slip. It's obviously going to be rough so always keep one hand free for the boat. As I'm saying it I'm doing a mental hand count. One for the boat. One for the beer. One for the rod. I hope these guys are from Three Mile Island and may actually have three hands. I fire up the boat, turn on the electronics, pull out of the slip and head south. We can see Uncle Joe waving as his form fades away behind us. Lucky Bastard! It's actually rough in Kent Narrows.

A thirty knot nor'easter churning up whitecaps in what should be "the sheltered water." An incoming tide is just pushing the water against the wind. I sure hope the fishing is better than the weather. My surveillance reports have good fishing just a few miles south of Kent Narrows in the Eastern Bay. Should only be a two to three foot chop down there. "Fishable." The windshield wipers are thumping in all directions trying, but failing, to keep up with the rain and spray. Water is coming through the front window

even though I have it locked down as tight as it will go. Water is soaking the foam mattress on the cot down below and we haven't even left the no wake zone. \$\*#!

The bilge pump light is flickering on and off. Luckily it's for the fore pump. If the stern pump starts going were in trouble. \$\*#! My guy are all huddled on the engine box. What now provides them a modicum of comfort was only a couple of hours ago a dining room table for countless seagulls and crows. No one's puking yet. But we still have eight hours to go. \$\*#! I can't troll because the winds too strong and the lines will have too much of a bow to set a hook. Jigging will be even worse because we have to drift dead with the wind and against the tide. #\*@\$! Lucky Uncle Joe. I'm starting to develop a bad attitude.

Where can I catch fish out of the wind? If I have to go much below Parsons Island I'm toast. I flick on the fish finder and hope for the best. Nothing but blue screen. A small flock of birds are starting to work about a mile



south. I head in their direction. I wonder if they're the ones that trashed my boat last night. They better show me something those dirty white Bastards. Everyone in the back still seems ok. In fact their already drinking beer at 7:30am. And by the look of my waste bucket their pretty proficient at it. I can only hope they can jig as well as they can drink. As I near the birds I can see a few small splashes.

Waves are making the boat bob like a cork. Everyone is either seated or locked in place. I put the boat in neutral just to see how she'll settle. I know the engine scares the fish but I'm afraid to turn it off in case I have to maneuver to get out of trouble. Darn, it's rough. I pick out the most stable looking guys and pass out three rods with jigs already tied on. Half ounce heads with five inch rubber tails. I give them a quick lesson in jigging. Jigging 101. Thirty seconds. You know. Small quick jerks and slowwwwly lower the rod after each jerk. Fish usually hit on the fall. Hopefully they get it. The rain and salt spray has made the deck an ice skating rink. Hold on! Really, when it's this rough the boat does the jigging for you. Just don't drop the rod. I don't want to have explain to Billy and Joe at Shore Tackle why I need another rod. They lower the jigs over the side and immediately get three bites. But no hookups. When the guys reel them up we see all three plastics

cleanly cut off right behind the hook. Blues. #\*@\$! There goes a couple bucks. We try again. Same results. I think the tackle stores have a hatchery system to keep the Bluefish populations up. Time to move.

Just as we start to pull away I notice a few good marks on the depth finder close to the bottom. One short cast and I have our first solid hookup. Turns out to be our first keeper Rock, about twenty inches. Rogue waves! @\*#\$!!! I lunge for the cabin and turn the boat into them. I'm not quick enough. Coolers go sliding across the deck. One with a passenger, who drops his partially open beer only to have it shoot foam all over his buddies. Things in the cabin are all thrown to the floor. My brand new trolling rods are on the floor lodged against the head door. Hope there isn't anyone in there! I straighten her out into the waves and engage the autopilot. This gives me a chance to clean up the mess. I check on the crew. Everyone's fine except one guy who looks a little green. I reason he'll be our first puker.

The morning progresses like this. My guys take turns fishing because I can't leave the cabin and with the spray curtains down only three at a time can fish the windward side of the boat. The green guy is still drinking with his buddies even though his face is changing colors as fast a Chameleon on acid. I'm amazed he hasn't blown chunks yet. They must have cast

iron stomachs to keep down all that Iron City Stuff. We manage to catch a few more keeper Rock as well as a few small Bluefish. So the day isn't a total disaster. I think they call this full contact fishing. It's also full contact drinking. I notice my 3.5 gallon dry-wall bucket is now overflowing with beer cans and now there is a steady procession of pissers going back and forth to the head. I figured out one day that my head will hold about ten cases of beer. After that each roll of the boat sloshes a bit out of the tank vent and it runs down the edge of the cockpit. This acts as a visual and nasal alarm indicating that I should have had the tank pumped the last time I was near a pump out station. And the way these guys are going I'm just waiting for the alarms to go off.

Around lunch time I notice mister green face heading for the head. He lingers in there far longer than he should but since I don't hear any strange sounds I forget about him. When the door finally opens the horrible stench of piss and vomit waft through the cabin. Even the guys outside fishing in the Gale force winds stop what they're doing and turn towards the cabin. Holy &@\$# I hear at least three times. Poor Mister green face turns sheepishly towards me and asks "How do you flush the sink?" You mean the head I correct. No. I flushed the head but the sink

is full of my breakfast. @\*#\$! Just then the head alarm goes off. @\*#\$! I look out back and see the yellow and brown line streaking for the starboard scupper. @\*#\$&!!!!!! I guess I'll be skipping lunch today. In fact I'm starting to taste the peanut butter and honey sandwich I ate four hours ago. Just then I hear the distinct sound of a rod snap. Not only will that cost me but now I have to visit Shore Tackle again with my tail between my legs. @\*#\$!

That's it. Guys, it looks like today is a half day trip. Before someone gets hurt or we break anything else I think we should head for home. And don't forget about old Uncle Joe (Lucky Bastard). He's still waiting at the dock. Plus you'll beat the traffic and get back to Philly at a reasonable hour. All the while I'm thinking I need a drink and since I don't drink on the boat I NEED to get back ASAP. No arguments so we turn tail and head in.

Backing into my slip is tough in good weather. In a storm it can be downright evil. You have to consider the wind AND the current. Come around. Line it up. And goose it until you develop steerage. If it doesn't work the first time, and you don't get pinned into another boat you pull out and try again. Only once have I ever just given up and tied out on the outside of the bar and wait until the wind died down. This might be time number two. So as I line it up with wet old Uncle Joe yelling encouragement from the dock I slam it into reverse. Right in. The highlight of my day! Dock lines on, fish cleaned. In the bar with the first cold one. Fifteen minutes from dock lines to first beer. Not hard when you only have six small fish to clean. As fast and hard as the rain is falling the fish blood and puke will be washed off the boat by the time I've finished my third beer. It will require something much stronger before I attempt cleaning the head!

We settle up at the bar. Five hundred bucks. No tip. Unless you count the case of Iron City beer they left in my cooler. Ironically they took the three cans of IC Light. What's up with that. They won't be back. So, I spent 25 bucks on lures, 100 bucks on the busted rod (If Billy and Joe have mercy on me.), 50 bucks for gas, another 225 bucks per trip for fixed expenses, licenses, taxes, maintenance, slip rent, etc. I netted a cool 100 bucks. Counting my phone and computer time I had at least nine hours into this trip not counting my recovery (drinking) time. I figured I made a whopping \$11.11 an hour. Holy crap!! I must REALLY love to fish. It could be worse though. My Philly guys drove four hours round trip plus six hours on the water in a gale force monsoon and they went home with five pounds of fish fillets at around \$100.00 per pound. They must really LOVE to fish!!!!

Hopefully my next trip will remind me how much I love my job!! Hope your feeling better.

*Love,  
Captain Mark Galasso*

Maryland Reported Antlered and Antlerless Deer Harvest for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Hunting Seasons

County	Antlered			Antlerless			Total		
	2014-15	2015-16	% Change	2014-15	2015-16	% Change	2014-15	2015-16	% Change
Allegany	1,731	1,984	14.6	1,320	1,384	4.8	3,051	3,368	10.4
Anne Arundel	817	882	8.0	2,075	1,810	-12.8	2,892	2,692	-6.9
Baltimore	1,502	1,463	-2.6	3,911	3,507	-10.3	5,413	4,970	-8.2
Calvert	470	586	24.7	1,101	1,079	-2.0	1,571	1,665	6.0
Caroline									
whitetail	734	809	10.2	1,704	1,989	16.7	2,438	2,798	14.8
sika	1	0	*	1	2	*	2	2	*
Carroll	1,634	1,810	10.8	3,830	3,428	-10.5	5,464	5,238	-4.1
Cecil	1,005	1,033	2.8	2,455	2,095	-14.7	3,460	3,128	-9.6
Charles	1,132	1,072	-5.3	2,392	2,051	-14.3	3,524	3,123	-11.4
Dorchester									
whitetail	774	827	6.8	1,865	1,686	-9.6	2,639	2,513	-4.8
sika	1,140	1,144	0.4	1,707	1,584	-7.2	2,847	2,728	-4.2
Frederick	2,346	2,553	8.8	4,926	4,596	-6.7	7,272	7,149	-1.7
Garrett	2,486	2,658	6.9	1,967	1,750	-11.0	4,453	4,408	-1.0
Harford	1,038	1,047	0.9	2,660	2,425	-8.8	3,698	3,472	-6.1
Howard	682	701	2.8	1,899	1,633	-14.0	2,581	2,334	-9.6
Kent	1,052	1,093	3.9	2,268	2,064	-9.0	3,320	3,157	-4.9
Montgomery	1,520	1,401	-7.8	3,890	3,343	-14.1	5,410	4,744	-12.3
Prince George's	820	845	3.0	1,848	1,667	-9.8	2,668	2,512	-5.8
Queen Anne's	1,096	1,166	6.4	2,731	2,517	-7.8	3,827	3,683	-3.8
Saint Mary's	848	902	6.4	1,929	1,787	-7.4	2,777	2,689	-3.2
Somerset									
whitetail	665	727	9.3	1,826	1,811	-0.8	2,491	2,538	1.9
sika	1	5	*	6	5	*	7	10	*
Talbot	774	836	8.0	2,087	2,004	-4.0	2,861	2,840	-0.7
Washington	2,026	2,311	14.1	3,061	2,971	-2.9	5,087	5,282	3.8
Wicomico									
whitetail	886	890	0.5	2,248	2,151	-4.3	3,134	3,041	-3.0
sika	62	57	*	50	60	*	112	117	*
Worcester									
whitetail	1,015	1,023	0.8	2,809	2,728	-2.9	3,824	3,751	-1.9
sika	24	30	*	36	40	*	60	70	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,281</b>	<b>29,855</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>58,602</b>	<b>54,167</b>	<b>-7.6</b>	<b>86,883</b>	<b>84,022</b>	<b>-3.3</b>



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-Theodore Roosevelt



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# SPANNING THE GLOBE

## Missouri Fisherman Takes Massive Record Black Buffalo

The Missouri Department of Conservation announced recently that its archery record for black buffalo has been broken again, this time by bowfisherman Travis Cardona of Hillsboro. According to officials, Cardona was fishing on a lake near the Duck Creek Conservation area when he arrowed a behemoth fish on March 14. The black buffalo weighed about 74 pounds and was measured by wildlife officials on a certified scale.

“Believe it or not, once I shot the giant, I didn’t know it was that big of a fish until it started swimming back to the boat,” Cardona said. “Believe you me, after it swam towards the boat the fight was on. It was a five minute battle that seemed like an eternity.”

The archer said it took as many as four arrows before the fish could be hauled into the boat.



Cliff Whittington and son Jerry doubled down on 2 nice Gobblers. On April 23 2016. This was Jerry's first Turkey.

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What would an edition be without Angelina Watts, she Came home for spring break to do some of her favorite fishing...Crappies at Wye Mills.

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Craig Dashiell with his first gobbler taken with Patrick Buckel in Kent County.



Captain Dave Shulte and his first mate Megan Higgins with a 50 inch Striper that was released before the season started.

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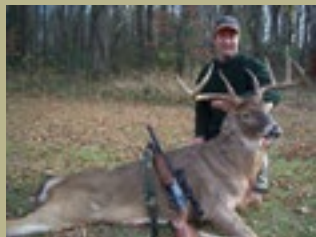
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By Grant Soukup

## “Montana Grant”



## GOOGLE-EYES!!!

When I was a boy fishing the Potomac River in Maryland, I routinely caught sunnies, bluegills, catties, bass, and “Google eyes”. These rock bass were feisty, fat, and had huge red eyes. Kind of like our “Teckie Kids” of today!

“Google” has now become a word in the Webster’s Modern Dictionary. If we have a question, the first answer is always “Google It!” Never before have we had so much information at our fingertips.

Now that we carry cell phones, access computers, I-Pads, laptops, and tablets, the need for a set of Encyclopedias or cases full of books, are gone with the dinosaurs. Hunters can locate a place, identify the most active time for critter movement, You-Tube directions for how to dress, cook, and taxidermy their harvest. We can text, twitter, Bluetooth, Sync, mapquest, skycam, and communicate almost anywhere in real time.

Fly Fishing has become a gear and gimmick-oriented adventure. There are way more goodies, tips, and ideas out there than ever before. The internet makes it even easier to search and discover. Videos help the ADHD generation learn from actually watching it being done.

Many of us have files, folders, binders, and books full of fly patterns, fishing destinations, and stories. They take up space and collect dust. Just pack up and move a couple times and you will know what I mean. Now, most information is the press of a button away.

Spock, of Star Trek fame, had his triquarter device, and we have our cell phones! If someone tells you about fishing or hunting destinations, you can quickly Google it. You can do a Mapquest and select the best route, time, and mileage. New fly patterns, game calls, camo wear, scents, fishing and hunting licenses, current conditions...no problem. Google will show you 10,000 links and hundreds of images. Facebook allows us to be friends with our outdoor brethren around the world. We can wish Happy Birthday to friends that we have never met while sharing advice and stories about our sport. Seeing their pictures of salmon, stags, destinations, and friends makes this huge planet a smaller place.

The other day I clicked on a Facebook link that advertised a new fish finder that looked like a bobber. You cast the device to a spot and then turn on your cell phone app to activate and view the data. Depth, temperature, structures, and fish were live on your cellphone screen. So many new gimmicks are a quick Google search away.

Weather, maps, GPS, flashlights, and a thousand other things can be accessed in moments. Sometimes this can be a bad thing. A few years ago, I was hunting elk with my brother. We had walked several miles in the dark to a spot where I had found a huge, active bull. I let out a long bugle and chuckle which was quickly answered. Broken twigs, smell, and grunts announced that the bull was coming in. Suddenly, my brother’s cell phone goes off!!! What was worse was that he answered it! It was a friend from back east seeing how the hunting in Montana was going! Needless to say the bull “hung up” and all cell phones were turned off or muted.

Some stodgy folks refuse to move forward with the newer technology. I know some people that still have corded phones, 8-track tapes, and complain that they can’t buy incandescent light bulbs anymore. Cell phones can fit in a pocket, digital music has better quality, and newer light bulbs save you money. There are certainly pros and

cons with all new things we learn but the pros definitely outweigh the cons.

Communication has always been what sets a society apart. Using our senses to identify, learn, share, question, locate, and discover, is why humans are at the top of the food chain. Stories about hunters and fishermen have been painted onto cave walls, animal skins, paintings, slides, photographs, videos, CDs, and Go Pros. Outdoorsmen take pride in their adventures and harvests. Bragging rights are a huge part of hunting and fishing. Technology records memories.

Having information allows us to have “choice”. You can’t always make the best choices without all of the facts. Those that refuse to grow and fall behind, fail to grasp all that life offers. Life is hard enough. The one guarantee about life is that things change. Information is power! Making better choices creates more opportunity.

Change is also obvious afield. The way we hunt, the baits we fish with, the laws, regulations, locations, and techniques routinely change. Rattling for deer does not work like it used to, and Velveeta cheese has been replaced by Power Bait. Cane poles are used as plant stakes more than fishing rods.

It is ok to reflect and remember the good old days when we fished and hunted out of the “van down by the river”. What change forces us to do is to continue to learn. Education and technology keep our minds fresh and at full function. It is ok to learn a new trick, tip, idea or skill. In many cultures, it is the seniors in the generation that share the tribe’s history, skills, and knowledge. Today, many seniors hold onto the past and fear the future. What message does that send to the next generation?

Change is hard. The rewards that come with positive change are huge. Doing the same things, the same way, at the same time, using the same things will certainly result in things staying the same. If “same” means unfilled tags, empty stringers, unhappy campers, and less fun, then maybe it is time to change. No sane person chooses to catch less fish, see fewer critters, have fewer friends, and be miserable.

This hunting season I was in a tree stand waiting for the big buck to come by. My muted cell phone vibrated and told me that I had a text. My buddy was hunting a farm miles away at the same time. He shared a video of a doe and fawn under his stand. Another friend shared a “selfie” of his smiling camo painted face 20 feet up in a tree. The next text came from a friend in Montana that just harvested his first antelope at 357 yards! Several hunting buddies were hunting together in real time miles apart. How cool can it get?

Wait a minute the next text was from my wife asking if I could stop at the store and grab some groceries. Technology can have its downside too.

**“Stay thirsty my friend!”  
Montana Grant**

**For more Montana Grant, visit his website at [www.montanagrantsfishing.com](http://www.montanagrantsfishing.com)**

## Fresh Fish!



Trout season opening day is a perfect time to put your fish where your mouth is! Catching dinner is a wonderful way to enjoy the harvest.

Once you have a limit of fresh trout,

a quick fileting and some pre-prepping will allow you to make the event even more appetizing. Gather the fishing crew, drop the tailgate on the truck and break out the fish fry gear.

On this day we had cole slaw, potato salad, and pickles. Chips, Tastykakes, fish sandwiches, fresh buns, sliced tomato, tartar sauce and a cold drink created fat bellies and a great memory. This was a cheap, simple, and fun way to create a great fishing memory.

The Coleman stove and a cast iron fry pan served as the fry station. Just use a zip bag filled with dry all purpose pancake batter and some Old Bay seasoning to coat your filets. The skinless and boneless filets were shaken, coated, and added to the hot oil. A few minutes of frying and it is time for lunch. I let the cooked fish rest a bit on a paper towel. There will be no left overs!

Everyone has their own sandwich variation. Some add the cole slaw on top of their filets. Another crushed potato chips between the filets and bun. Others prefer a cocktail sauce or no sauce at all. Diet conscious fishermen ate the filets without the bread. The fresh fish tastes wonderful on its own.

Throw some folding chairs and tables into the truck for added comfort. Some cold drinks will wash down the great meal.

Whatever your tastes are, you will be sure to enjoy the fried fresh fish feeding frenzy. Other fishermen may be drawn into the feeding herd so offer and share your bounty. Food has a way of bringing folks together!



**Jesse and Whitney Lowers "sticking a limit" on the opening day of trout season. Family, friends, and fishing are a perfect way to enjoy the day!.**

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## Coastal Report

By Capt. Mark Sampson

Pick any coastal fishing town and you'll find the same thing - the big fish get all the glory. Monster tuna, billfish, big dolphin, swordfish, and sharks find their way on to the high gloss covers of national magazines, books, posters, and travel ads. Even movies highlight the "mega" fish and all but ignore the everyday workingman's fish. Think about it, when is the last time you saw a movie about a flounder terrorizing a coastal community? Why wasn't Hemingway's "Old Man And The Sea" about an old man and a croaker, rather than a blue marlin? Why Isn't Ocean City the "Seabass Capital of the World" instead of the White Marlin Capital?

Along with the media, monster-offshore leviathans certainly capture the interest and desire of most anglers. But there is also a fraction of those who ignore the hype of the big fish and recognize the magic and pure fun (and challenge) of targeting more manageable size, everyday fish. Bluefish, flounder, trout, rockfish, croaker, seabass, tautog, drum, herring, skates, sand sharks, blowfish, spot - Delmarva's inshore and nearshore list is darn near endless and each species offers anglers new opportunities, seasons, and challenges. Best of all, fishermen can catch these critters without enduring the astronomical expense involved in running big boats many miles offshore along with the major concerns of equipment, weather, and seasickness!

Most beginning anglers will find themselves totally satisfied by simply catching fish anyway on any tackle. As a matter of fact, most probably prefer to fish in a manor and with tackle that will best ensure their chance of bringing in fish. One-pound bluefish on #20 pound line - no problem, 16" flounder on #40 pound bottom rod - fine, whatever it takes to just get the fish is all they're concerned about. At that stage in a new angler's career it's usually all about "catching fish" and there's no need to make it any more challenging because to an inexperienced angler the who process of "fishing" is challenging enough.

But as beginning anglers become more experienced they'll often start to long for something more from their fishing adventures in the form of new challenges, excitement, new experiences, along with new species to fish for. And

it's at this crossroads in many people's angling career that they choose to leave the protected inshore waters and venture far offshore in quest of big fish in blue water. But many won't realize until long into their fishing career that if new challenges are what they desire, they need not leave the inlet and head east to find them. Ocean City's back bays, surf and inlet hold an unending wealth of light tackle opportunities for those willing to depart from the standard heavy tackle "bottom bouncing" techniques used by most inshore anglers.

With a little thought and creativity it should be easy for any fisherman at any skill level to enhance their enjoyment of inshore fishing. The process might be as simple as changing up to lighter line, or switching over to a different technique altogether. How about trolling for

flounder instead of drifting, or using small jigs around marsh banks and bridges for trout, or casting surface plugs for rockfish or blues. Surf casters can put away the long rods and bottom rigs and work the shore-break trough with a light spinning tackle and diving plugs.

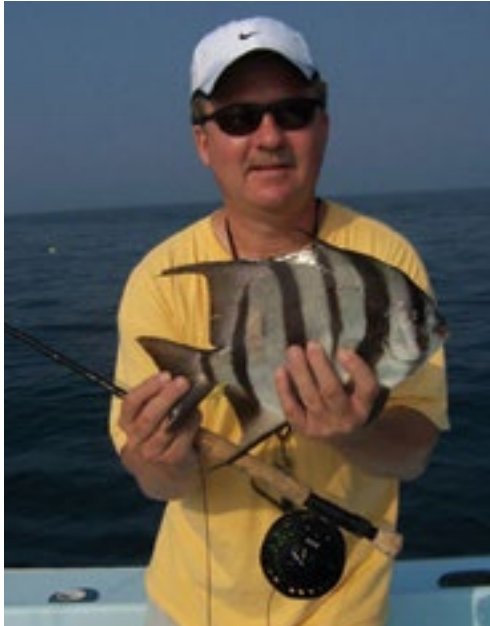
Want to really spice up your inshore enjoyment? Head out one day with nothing in the boat but a fly rod and selection of saltwater fly patterns. Trout, bluefish, rockfish, yes even flounder, croaker, seabass and just about anything else that swims the bay can be yours on a fly

if you put the time and effort into it. Or leave the dock without any bait at all and see what you can catch strictly with the artificial lures that have been doing nothing but taking up space in your tackle box all these years. Or just make a commitment to yourself to fish with lighter tackle than you usually do so that every fish you hook gives you a run for your money and a fun memory that will make you want to get back out on the water soon.

I guess that's really the key to this whole thing. Whether one arms themselves with a fly rod, spinning tackle, bait caster, or a handline - those who accept new challenges, and commit to - and stick with them, even though they might be able to catch fish more quickly and easily using other methods, will find that they have breathed new life into an otherwise routine fishery.

Ocean City's inshore waters can offer world class fishing opportunities to anglers with the creativity and motivation to give them a try. Light tackle excitement needn't be reserved for

those who jet off to exotic fishing destinations. As more fishermen dare to explore the gold mine of opportunities right here in our local waters, these inshore fish might someday attain the status and recognition so historically given the offshore big boys.



Maryland Catfish, 30 lbs. 35" caught by Britany Groht

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## “The Last Word”

### 2016 Legislative Round Up

By Steve Huettner

It will be May when this issues hits the streets. There are certain things you can take to the bank when it comes to the month of April. Uncle Sam wants his money, the Chesapeake Bay will be covered with boats trolling for rockfish, turkey hunters will be drinking copious amounts of coffee to stay awake at work, and the gavel will fall on the 2016 General Assembly in Annapolis.

When the 2016 session came to an end, it marked a busy session for those that like to hunt in Maryland. Let’s break down how hunters fared during the past session.

The big news is the passage of the Poaching Restitution Act which was discussed in the April issue. Passage of the bill came down to which version would pass, the Senate or the House version. The Senate version was a bill that has been neutered, while the House version had a serious bite. In the end the House version prevailed.

In a nut shell, shoot a doe and pay \$300 and do 40 hours of community service. Illegally take a buck that scores less than 150 Boone and Crockett and get convicted and you are paying a minimum of \$2000 and up to \$5000, and performing 80 hours of community service. Shoot a buck that scores over 150 Boone and Crockett and open up the wallet because fines will start at \$5000 and can range all the way up to \$10000 and 80 hours of community service. That is not a typo. Illegally shoot a 180 class B and C buck, get convicted and be prepared to pay. If you are an official scorer for Boone and Crockett your services may be needed as an expert witness in a court of law.

At those prices you are better off booking a guided hunt in Iowa or Illinois. One wonders how long it will take for word to get out that poaching just got really expensive. To ensure monies collected from these fines go back to the wild, any monies collected go to the state wildlife management and protection fund, not the general fund. My gut tells me this fall a lot of people are going to be surprised and Defense Attorneys are going to be brushing up on wildlife statues.

A major thank you should to the Maryland Hunting Coalition who worked on drafting the bill, getting sponsors in both the House and the Senate, getting sportsmen

to contact their legislators, and shepherding the

House bill all the way

through to the last day of session.

Bow hunters made out well with the distance you can hunt from an occupied dwelling being reduced to 50 yards in Calvert County in Harford County, 100 yards in Anne Arundel. Bambi beware as the distance from the house to where you live has been decreased for those that hunt with string and arrow. With most archery hunters shooting at 40 yds. and under and being in elevated stands these distances make sense.

On the Sunday hunting front, many were expecting a major assault from the horse community to either give back day in certain counties or restrict the time you could hunt on Sunday until 11am. Sorry its 11am so you need to get out of the woods so no the nonexistent horseback riders can come galloping across your farm. In the end, it looks like Carroll County will get Sunday turkey hunting (on private property). Caroline County and Harford County hoping to add more days unfortunately did not prevail, along with allowing bow hunting on Sunday from mid-January till the end of the season. In the end it seemed like a draw between the pro Sunday group and the anti-Sunday group.

Other bills that did not make it out of their respective chambers were bills that would have allowed complimentary licenses for Military personnel, veterans, POW’s, and Disabled Veterans. Going down in flames was a study to look at reintroducing elk to Cecil County. Elk in Elk Neck State Forest?

In the end the sporting community has gotten much more focused on one or two issues that they deem important before the session starts, work on building a broad coalition, engaging elected officials and seeing those pieces of legislation all the way through to the end. In the end it shows that democracy and the political system still work despite the naysayers.

*For all those involved, thank you.*



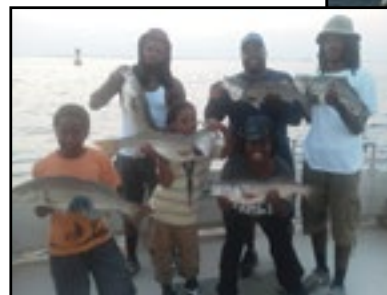
Abby Russum with a fine Eastern Shore Gobbler.

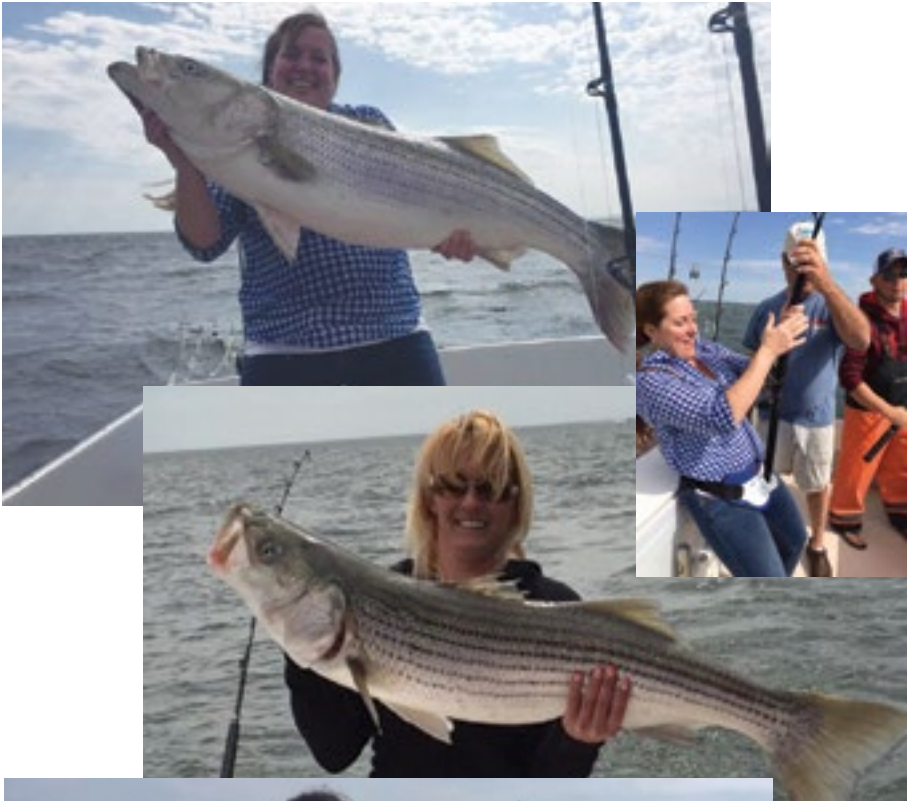


J.P. Quillen and the kids are learning the finer points of Catfishing.

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On the Charter boat *Sea Dux* with Captain Brian Councill the ladies were getting it done last month.



Kendall Maliszewski shot this huge gobbler at Fishing Bay on 4/27/16. I hope she also has some luck getting that old truck started!

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Casey and Morgan Reno with girl power aboard the *Casey Michelle*.



Casey's fish finally settled down enough for her to hold it with a little help from dad, Captain Brady.



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## “Fishin’ Back East”

### HAIRJIGS FOR PANFISH

By Jim Gronaw

As I climbed down the embankment of the small spillway of a Delaware millpond, two thoughts crossed my mind. One, it was cold! The overnight lows had plummeted to nearly 30 degrees and, in the early morning darkness I wondered...will the crappies even think about chasing a lure or bait?

After about 15 casts I felt a light bump at the rod tip and set the hook to the first panfish of the morning, a plump 12-inch crappie that just barely made contact with my lure. I was tossing a 1/32-ounce hairjig of my own

perch. Smaller, scaled-down versions of these lures now are commonly used and are the ‘go to’ option when panfish get finicky or when cold front conditions prevail.

About 20 years ago, the late Charlie Nuckols introduced his craft hair jigs that became standard issue for winter smallmouth freaks in the TVA lakes region. It just made sense...put an enticing, quivering jig in front of a lethargic fish and the odds are he’s going to bite. Before his untimely death, Nuckols’ ‘float and fly’ technique would gain fame, mirroring much the same

methods as East Coast anglers ‘bobber and shad dart’ tactic. Certainly nothing new, this overlooked pattern remains deadly to this day, especially on crappies and bluegills.

PREFERRED PATTERNS...

I use hairjigs a

lot during emerging spring conditions or situations where a gentle, and methodical, ‘fall rate’ is required to get the fishes’ attention. They can be effective on weed edge panfish during mid summer when bluegills are done spawning or when slowly retrieved amid spawning crappies or bluegills.

Crappies can show a preference for a gaudy pattern in hairjig options to include color schemes of chartreuse, lime green, blue, purple or pink. Over the years, I have had particular success with pink patterns and I can’t say as to why this is. Pink just seems to be a hot color for slab crappies. Chartreuse would be my second choice. Ideally, patterns should be tied to resemble small minnows, as they are one of the preferred foods of this panfish. Jighead sizes can be important, as the rate of fall, or sink rate, will vary with different jighead and

line sizes. A 1/16-ounce hairjig will fall a lot faster than a 1/64-ounce lure when both are fished on four pound test monofilament. Conversely, it will be tough to even cast a 1/64-ounce jig on even six-pound line. For this reason, I like to use four-pound monos for the delivery of all the panfish hairjigs I use. Strike detection is paramount, and sensitive, light and high visibility monos aid in this and enable you to see jumps or ticks in the line from light-striking crappies. Most effective sizes for slabs are 1/32 and 1/64-ounce jigs.

When targeting bluegills, I have found that these fish tend to favor more of a plain brown wrapper than a glitzy package. Basic colors of brown, black and beige tend to get the attention of bull bluegills. Olive is another classic bluegill color. Sure, they’ll take a bright offering at times, but the day in;

day out winner remains basic. Tiny ‘hackle jigs’ that more resemble flies can be very effective fished below a sensitive float on a windy day. I have used hairjigs as small as 1/124th of an ounce below bobbers. Such lures can also be casted as is with 4 or 5 weight fly fishing outfits. As yet another option, some anglers prefer to tip these tiny jigs with either a waxworm or a maggot

if the conditions are particularly tough.

Under almost all situations, panfish hairjigs can be fished effectively with ultralight spinning gear and four-pound test monos. We tend to favor longer, 7 to 8 foot spinning rods under some situations that would require longer casts. But a six-foot graphite stick with good sensitivity will cover the majority of the panfish bases.

WHERE FOR HAIR...

As good as they can be for big gills and crappies, hairjigs are not a miracle lure that always guarantees a bucket of eaters. When faced with heavy wood and brushy environs where lost lures are a reality due to snags, hairjigs may not be the best financial option due to the higher price tag they carry as opposed to less expensive plastic counterparts. Lets’ face it...tubes, twisters and other plastics are cheaper and come in a ton of color patterns. Hairjigs, however, tend to shine when a tough bite and finesse presentation is required to coax cautious slabs from their lairs. In spillway situations such as the one at the beginning of this article, those crappies were tucked in behind a rock or concrete portion and simply waited for something to pass their way out of the current. I would actually cast into the current but

allow the jig to swing out of it and settle gently into a calmer, quiet pocket, hopefully to be ambushed by a big crappie.

Hairjigs are also game winners when suspended below sensitive floats and allowed to drift across sun warmed shallow flats in the spring or along weed edges in the summer. Often, just the movement of the wind blown bobber is all that is needed to give the quivering jig the action to attract panfish. Bait tipping is always an option. Sure, it’s all very simple, but it works.

OTHER SPECIES, TOO...

Although small hairjig presentations shine in the panfishing department, there are actually few species of fish that will not take one of these lures. We have caught large and smallmouth bass, chain pickerel, white and yellow perch, shad, herring, northern pike, stripers, trout and even carp on them. You may be in for quite a surprise on your next cast.

The look and appearance of a hairjig is different from that of most plastics. The combination of hair textures and colors can be created to depict a small, native minnow specie or a emerging insect that the fish are feeding on. They may be the ultimate finesse option for big and wary panfish.



This big bluegill took a liking to a 1/64th ounce shad dart...an East Coast favorite for hairjigs.

design and had hoped the temperature drop would not put these panfish off their feed. That first fish gave me confidence! A few casts later, another feather touch at rods end resulted in another nice crappie. By then it was starting to get light out and I could see a little better and detect strikes as well.

I wish I could say that I ‘torn ‘em up’. But the truth is that I had to work hard for seven crappie, all of which ran from 11 to just over 13 inches in length...quality slabs by everybody’s measure. No, not an earth-shattering catch, but I did what I had set out to do...catch some slabs for the pan despite the chilly springtime conditions. Mission accomplished.

THE EVOLUTION OF HAIRJIGS...

Back in the 1960’s bass fishermen started using larger hairjig options with bucktail and long pork trailers for coaxing big largemouths in mid-south reservoirs. Hairjigs have long been in the river smallmouth angler’s arsenal and in more recent years these lures have evolved into precise weapons for anglers seeking many gamefish species, to include crappies, bluegills and



This 1/100th ounce Trout Mini Magnet is tied with hair to replicate emerging fry...a favorite panfish forage during spring and early summer.



This fine spring bluegill took a 1/80th ounce orange and black ‘Oriole’ patterned hairjig. Bait tipping with worms, maggots or Berkley Gulp! products is optional.



## Broiled Striped Bass Recipe

*This Broiled Striped Bass recipe is so delicious you will not believe it. Once you have fresh fish immediately out of the water you will not want anything less. The Dixie Garlic and Herb marinade used on this fish is flavorful but not overpowering. It is perfect for fish. Thankfully, my husband loves to fish, and we enjoy reaping the rewards. Check out our online store for the Awesome Antler Rub used in this recipe to turn average sweet potatoes into AWESOME sweet potatoes.*

This Broiled Striped Bass recipe is so good you will think you are at a high end seafood restaurant.

### Ingredients

- 1 fillet striped bass
- 2 sweet potatoes
- 1 small zucchini
- 1 small green pepper
- 1 small onion
- 1/4 cup Dixie Garlic and Herb Marinade Sportsman's Table Item # CY4090
- 1 cup cold water
- 1 T. butter
- 2 T. panko bread crumbs
- 1 T. Red Dog Rub Sportsmans table Item # MG101
- 1 T. Awesome Antler Rub Sportsman's Table Item #MG104
- 2 chopped tomatoes
- 1 chopped banana peppers

### Instructions

Mix Dixie Garlic and Herb with water and marinate fish for 2-3 hours. Pull fish and dredge in bread crumbs and place in an oven safe dish. Place two pads of butter on top evenly spaced across fillet. Set aside. Mix olive oil with awesome antler rub. Slice sweet potatoes in 1/4 inch discs. Add seasoned olive oil and mix well. Place potatoes on a broiling pan. Bake at 400 for 20 min.



The Outdoor Enthusiast's Resource for Preparing and Serving Fish & Game with Style  
<http://recipes.sportsmansstable.com>

## Book of the Month

### BUCK, BUCK, MOOSE: RECIPES AND TECHNIQUES FOR COOKING DEER, ELK, MOOSE, ANTELOPE AND OTHER ANTLERED THINGS

by Hank Shaw

This is not your father's venison cookbook. Buck, Buck, Moose is the first comprehensive, lushly photographed, full-color guide to working with and cooking all forms of venison, including deer, elk, moose, antelope and caribou.

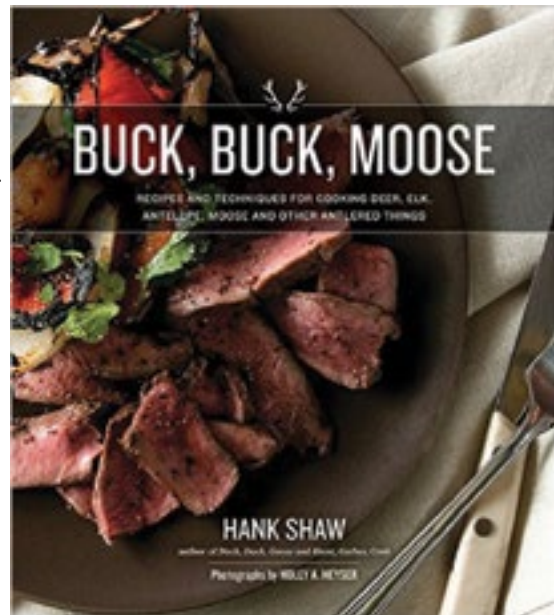
Buck, Buck, Moose will take you around the world, from nose to tail. The book features more than 100 recipes ranging from traditional dishes from six continents to original recipes never before seen.

You'll also get thorough instructions on how to butcher, age and store your venison, as well as how to use virtually every part of the animal. Buck, Buck, Moose also includes a lengthy section on curing venison and sausage-making.

Peppered throughout are stories of the hunt and essays on why venison holds such a special place in human society. Venison is far more than mere food. It is, in many ways, what made us human.

About the Author

A former restaurant cook and journalist, Hank Shaw is the author of two successful wild game cookbooks: Hunt, Gather Cook, and Duck, Duck, Goose -- both of which won critical acclaim. Shaw also runs the wild foods website Hunter Angler Gardener Cook, (honest-food.net) which has won both the James Beard Award as well as the International Association of Culinary Professionals award for best food website. His work has appeared in magazines ranging from Food & Wine to Organic Gardening, Field & Stream, Petersen's Hunting, Outdoor Life and Sunset.



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## MISC.

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**Eastern Shore, Virginia;** building lot along Occonannock creek, Exmore. 5 miutes to public boat ramp. 35k; possible owner financing. (717)632-3864

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Collin Noecker on right with a 49 1/2" Striper weighing in at 50 pounds aboard the *North-Star* with Captain Lawrence Tyler. Below is a 47 inch Striper brought aboard the *North-Star* on opening day.



Shawn Harper with her nice Striper aboard the *Northstar*.

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