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Mr. George Donn and Mr. Billy Graham of Brentwood, MD October 2016 catch of the day!

Captain Dave Shulte is not only good with a rod and reel, his bow skills are good too.
“Hooked on Fishing”

The Big Wind-Down

By Lenny Rudow

It’s getting chilly out there. Fishing is getting a whole lot tougher. The great fall blitz has drawn to a close, and fishing on the Chesapeake is winding down, right? No way—the only winding down you should be doing on is with your reel, after you’ve pumped a big fish a foot or two closer to the boat. If you’ve already pulled and winterized your boat, you’ve made a massive mistake. Yes, sure things are slowing down, but truth be told one of the best fishing of the year takes place when your fingers grow numb and your decks get iced. Here are two (very different) techniques that come on strong, just as many anglers call it quits.

LIGHT Tackle: The Power Plants

Free-falling water temperatures mean that many fish are looking for someplace warm to go, and power plants are just the ticket. Exactly when the fish will begin clustering in the warm water discharges is impossible to predict—every year is different—but you can bet that at some point, it’s going to happen. The “where” part of the equation is for the vast majority of us, obviously, limited to a pair of locations: Brandon Shores up near Baltimore, and Calvert Cliffs just north of Solomons.

At Brandon Shores, launch at Fort Armistead and head for the middle of the coal unloading pier you see on the south side of the power plant. When you’re about a half-mile from the pier, slow down and begin monitoring your temp gauge. Finding the specific area of hot water can be a bit challenging here, since the plume shifts, expands, and contracts with the wind and current. There’s no one specific temperature you want to look for, but instead, watch for a spike of several degrees and then start casting.

Whether you launch at Calvert Cliffs and run north or put in at Breezy and run south, it’s a much longer cruise to Calvert Cliffs. On the bright side, it’s also a lot easier to find the warm water—just run towards the power plant building until you see the torrent boiling up and rushing out into the bay. Remember, however, that the plume of rushing water isn’t the only area to fish. Fishing the visible rips running far out into the bay are, at some times, just as productive as fishing up close where the water is released.

At both of these spots, the basic tactics are the same. Cast and retrieve 5” to 7” soft plastics like BKDs or Bust ’Em on leadheads. Generally speaking you’ll want to use a slower retrieve than you’ve been using lately, keep the lure relatively deep in the water column and at times, bouncing right along the bottom. One important difference between these hot-spots: the water is significantly deeper at Calvert Cliffs than it is at Brandon Shores, and the current is significantly stronger.

As a result, you’ll almost always need to opt for a heavier jig head to keep that lure down deep. And bring plenty of them—the bottom is strewn with rocks, so snags and break-offs are common.

HEAVY Tackle: Open Water Trolling

At this time of year, we sometimes get an influx of big fish moving through. Like spring trophies, these fish usually aren’t schooled nor are they relating to structure. That means trolls should switch back to “collision fishing” tactics. In other words, saturate the water with as many lures as you can handle, and hope one passes sufficiently close to a fish’s nose to get a strike. Break the planer boards back out, reach for your gang rigs like umbrellas, tandems, and Billy Bars, and essentially set out your spring spread.

The “where” part of the trolling equation is much, much harder to answer. Some seasons the big fish show up north of the bridge, other seasons they’re down by Point Lookout, and some seasons the bite is best somewhere in-between. To try to predict where they’ll show up this year—or even state as a “fact” that they will—would be foolhardy. The bottom line? You need to stay in touch with your fishing buddies, monitor the reports, talk it up at the tackle shop, and take your best guess until you figure out just where the best fishing will be.

SAFETY NOTE: Sorry to get preachy on ya’l, but last winter a friend of a friend died of hypothermia while out on the water. And at this time of year, it’s the biggest danger of fishing on the bay. I’m sure you already know how to be safe, but let me note two important things that many of us overlook all too often. First, get and wear a float-coat (the ones made by Mustang are incredible). Not only will you be wearing a PFD every time you leave the dock, the foam floatation in them is great insulation so these jackets are also extremely warm. Jackets are also extremely warm. Second, don’t forget to attach the kill switch safety lanyard if you’re in a relatively small outboard boat. If you fall overboard and it isn’t connected, you’re done. Now, just so we don’t end things on a negative note: good luck fishing!

Yes, that’s the Calvert Cliffs power plant in the background. If only the air temperature matched the discharge temperature...

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November 2016
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A word from our Pastor—

Have you ever felt like you were stuck in grief? Have you ever woke up the day after a tragedy in your life and at first, for that brief moment, you forgot about it or felt like it was a dream? But very soon you become fully aware. The hurt, the grief, is very real. You realize you have to face another day dealing with all the feelings that seem to be overtaking you. You are stuck and there’s no way out.

I remember waking up the day after my Father died. At first, I thought it was just another day, but then reality kicked in and it hit me...on this earth I have no Father. I had inevitably reached that age where my Grandparents were gone, and now my Dad. The hurt in my heart and the physical pain in my stomach were very real. Grief. The majority of us have been there at some point in our lives. The doctor’s dreaded diagnosis, the day the divorce was final or that loss of a loved one. It’s a horrible feeling, being stuck in grief. It makes you want to pull the covers over your head and flee back to that false sense of calm. That next morning as I was getting ready for the day that I really didn’t want to face, God’s spirit came over me with a peace that passes all understanding. I remembered the words that Jesus uttered at the tomb of Lazarus. “I am the resurrection and the life, he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Suddenly my panic became peace, my fate became faith and no longer was I stuck in grief but had the assurance I would see my Father again. My hope was restored.

We’re all going to deal with grief at some point in our lives, if not today, then tomorrow. But I remember the words of the song by Bill Gaither, “Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, Because He lives, all fear is gone, Because I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because he lives!”

— MEL BRINDLEY
Pastor
Chestertown, Md., Baptist Church
Captain Mark Hall (right) with Calvin Beller caught this huge Black Drum trolling last month out of Rock Hall, MD.

Hayden Wilson of Tilghman Island, MD. was excited about his 10 pointer.
Flea Market Finds

The longer I fish, the more I see lures come and go from the market. True, some like the Flying Lure and the Helicopter Lure were celebrated because their gimmickry quickly faded. Yet many baits, and many that I found productive, are no longer made. There lures may have been removed from production due to lack of sales, or merely by the company streamlining their product base. Sometimes the lure is still made, but a specific color has been cancelled. For whatever reason a lure is no longer made, the best place to hunt them down is at fishing flea markets. I am not looking for specifics. I am always looking for the lures that work for me that are no longer made, also ones that my friends are seeking for reasons. Early this year I learned that I have two more lures to add to my list. For small river fishing I keep an eye out for the Rebel Minnow jerkbaits are great bass and striped bass lures. Many bass guys look for old Bagley Killer Bee 2 baits. How they can tell the old from the new out of the packaging is beyond me. I know a few guys looking for Rapala Fat Raps in the 5 size. If you find a black/gold one, you can name your price to the next guy. And let’s not forget the Poe’s RC1 crankbait from the early 1990s. There are legions of bass guys looking for them.

One of the most coveted finds at a flea market is the Storm Short Wart. Harford County’s own Greg Vineyard hand-carved each popper to exact measurements and was a master with an airbrush. I bought the lure for $4 when they were selling for $20. The person behind the table truly did not know what he had. Over the years, manufacturers have tweaked lures to cut costs. Some have changed the type of plastic used in crankbaits. The catch rate is noticeably better on the older lures than the new ones. It is hard to tell the old from the new just by looking at a lure. Take an old model with you and compare the rattling noises. If the one on the table sounds different from the one you brought with you, put it right back and move on.

Sometimes it gets to the point where you don’t want to cast a lure because it’s the last of its kind that you have. Hopefully I will not break off any of the lures that I have to hunt for at flea markets. However, the couple of dollars I spend to get in the door typically goes to a good fishing organization, and it’s a great thrill of victory when I find a few of the discontinued lures I’m looking for.

Tell the old from the new out of the packaging is beyond me. I know a few guys looking for Rapala Fat Raps in the 5 size. If you find a black/gold one, you can name your price to the next guy. And let’s not forget the Poe’s RC1 crankbait from the early 1990s. There are legions of bass guys looking for them.

The wintertime fishing flea markets are great. They help us pass away the cold days between the days that are more temperate for fishing. Let us not forget, too, the same independent fishing stands in community flea markets as well. This is where I made my first flea market find – the Storm Short Wart. It’s the very same lure that helped let the late Ken Cook to his 1991 BASS Masters Classic victory. It only took a couple of years for it to lose favor and fade from tackle shop peg boards. The shad colored Wart was great for bass and the chartreuse/orange model was a yellow perch slayer.

There are great values to be found at flea markets. My best find ever was a handcrafted Competitive Edge popper. Harford County’s own Greg Vineyard hand-carved each popper to exact measurements and was a master with an airbrush. I bought the lure for $4 when they were selling for $20. The person behind the table truly did not know what he had. Over the years, manufacturers have tweaked lures to cut costs. Some have changed the type of plastic used in crankbaits. The catch rate is noticeably better on the older lures than the new ones. It is hard to tell the old from the new just by looking at a lure. Take an old model with you and compare the rattling noises. If the one on the table sounds different from the one you brought with you, put it right back and move on.

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With each new October cold front more and more waterfowl are migrating to their wintering grounds. The sights and sounds of large Vs of Canada Geese is enough to get any hunters blood churning. Our hunting partners of the canine variety are also feeling the migration coming. Their excitement is noticeable. Hopefully you have been maintaining basic training all summer long and aren’t getting ready to start from scratch.

By now any retriever who is going to hunt this season should have down the basic commands needed to be a SAFE hunting partner. Commands like sit, stay, come and heal should be as natural as eating for your dog. Hunters are injured or worse every year by dogs bolting from a blind and knocking over people or guns. Enough said on the basics.

By now your dog has also proven that they want nothing more than to retrieve. They probably have spent the summer with something in their mouth at all times. A ball, sock, training dummy, whatever. Hopefully they have also proven they have the nose to scent out a hidden bird and know how to use it.

So here are a few tips I’ve learned to take a good hunting dog and make them better. First and foremost don’t ask them to do something you know they won’t do. It not only raises your frustration it frustrates them as well compromising the rest of your session.

Train your dog to be good at the jobs you expect them to do. If you hunt in the deep marshes and the dog is expected to make blind retrieves and can’t see you for commands work on scent training. I did a lot of my training after dark. We would play hide and seek with scent dummies or dead birds. I would hide them in the field or the woods and send him on a line. I would increase the length of the line as retrieves became easy. You would be surprised how fast you can get to long blind retrieves. Single word commands or whistles help to stop a dog and start hunting.

If you tend to hunt in large fields, where your partner can see you, hand signals can be helpful. Stop, back, right or left can get a dog close to the target. Or at least down wind of a target where they can pick up a scent. Always have a distinct hand signal to go with a one word or whistle command. If you tend to hunt open water it can be vital to be able to control a dog while it’s swimming. You should be able to stop a dog and have it return to you even if it is within sight of it’s target. I’ve seen dogs swim a mile for a bird that either swam or flew away an hour ago.

Work on blind etiquette. A dog should be able to sit still in the blind for long periods of time without pacing or whining. Obviously older more experienced dogs have learned this. Younger dogs need to be taught it. And as his partner you need to be attuned to the dog’s needs, food, water and bathroom breaks.

You are going to hunt. Obviously we like our canine partners to be able to do everything well. But their just like your human partners that’s just not realistic. Work to their strengths. Taylor your training regimes to mimic actual hunting situations. Know how your NEW pup will act before he’s put into a position that might be critical. And DON’T ask them to do something they’re not going to do or haven’t been trained to do.

My son Cory and me on a hunt down in Trappe

Maryland Rockfish Open Benefiting Special Olympics MD

Congratulations on another highly successful Maryland Rockfish Open benefiting Special Olympics Maryland. Mike’s Crab House once again donated their staff time, restaurant/bar and amazing food and drinks for the best after-tournament party! The MSSA is honored to be a small part of this tournament and cannot wait to help out in 2017.

Congrats to the top 3 fundraising teams:

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Make your calendars for 2017!!!!!
Hunter Gottlieb with his first deer bagged on his own. Good Job!

Record Number of Black Bears Harvested During 2016 Hunt

Favorable weather conditions and increased hunting opportunities in western Maryland enabled hunters to achieve a record harvest in the 2016 Maryland Black Bear Hunt as the season came to a close Oct. 27, with a record 167 bears reported to mandatory check-in stations.

The harvest total is 72 more than the previous record set in 2015 (95 bears).

John Kennedy of Flintstone took the largest bear of the 2016 hunting season, a 559-pound male.

“We are thrilled with another record hunting season and view it as further evidence that the department is managing the black bear population effectively,” said Wildlife and Heritage Service Director Paul Peditto. “With such a healthy bear population throughout western Maryland, this hunt is an essential tool used to slow the growth of the expanding bear population.”

New this year hunters were allowed to hunt bears in all four western Maryland counties: Allegany, Frederick, Garrett and Washington.

Statistics from the 2016 Maryland Black Bear Hunt:

167 bears reported
30 from Allegany County
3 from Frederick County
126 from Garrett County
8 from Washington County
142 pounds average weight of the bears
58 percent of the bears were taken on private land

5,547 hunters applied for a hunting permit
1,708 hunters participated in the hunt
Shore Sportsman is conveniently located on Route 50/Ocean Gateway in Easton, Maryland. Shore Sportsman has been proudly serving hunters and anglers on the Mid-Shore for more than 25 years. Shore Sportsman offers hunting and fishing licenses, guns, scopes, hunting clothes and boots, repair services, bows, fishing equipment, live bait, and much, much more. The expert employees at Shore Sportsman bring a wealth of knowledge to their customers. All of the employees have at least five years of experience each.
Three Prince George’s County men were charged with poaching striped bass shortly after midnight last month by officers on surveillance in Dorchester County.

Rigoberto Melendez Galdamez, 46, of Laurel, Oseas Daniel Roque, 33, of Hyattsville, and Juan Jose Santos Peneda, 59, of Bowie, were each issued citations for exceeding their limit of striped bass and for possessing undersized striped bass. Seventeen of the 21 fish measured were undersized.

Officers stopped a car driven by Galdamez for motor vehicle violations as it left the area near Ferry Bridge on Hooper Island. The location has been the scene of a great deal of illegal recreational fishing activity this year.

The three men are due in Dorchester County District Court Jan. 18. The pre-payable fine is $125 for each violation. However, Pineda, who had 11 undersized fish, must appear in court and faces a maximum fine of $1,500.
Captain Wayne Coleman Gatling traveled to Saskatchewan, Canada to partake in some fine fall hunting with Brody Lingerman, Stephen and Christopher Titus and S Zaki Hossain. Above they are shown with Sandhill Cranes - Below Is Captain Wayne and Brody with a mess of Canadas.
Vicky Cronshaw from Deal Island with her first ever sika muzzeloader kill October 21, 2016. Photo courtesy of Toby Williamson.

Steve Huettner with a 17 pt Mule deer taken on a DIY hunt in Southeast Wyoming.

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Sunday (Jan. 29th, 2017) from 8AM to 3PM

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Ricky Danielson, of Grantsburg, has been bear hunting since age 10 or 11. Friends of his family, got him started bear hunting with hounds and he’s been hunting bears ever since.

Danielson has drawn three harvest tags over the years. This third tag went on the 576-pounder (field dressed) that he shot in Zone D in Burnett County. The bear was weighed at the Burnett Area Co-op in Grantsburg. He hunts with the Crex Meadows Bear Hunters group that is headed up by Jerry Burton. The group includes many of Burton’s family members and friends.

The big bear never showed up on a trail camera, but group members saw its tracks at several bait sites.

That day the group had four other hunters with kill tags.

“I just was the lucky one in the right spot at the right time,” said Danielson about a long day of bear hunting that began about 7:15 a.m. and ended about 4:30 p.m. when he shot the bear.

The big boar never treed and never stopped walking. The group started the track with three dogs. The track headed into a big swamp that Danielson said is about three miles by five miles. There are no roads through the swamp. Danielson said the closest the bear came to any road was .6 of a mile—and that’s where he shot it.

Throughout the day, any of the five hunters with kill tags tried closing on the bear in wet, nasty cover.

“It’s a bad swamp. I was up to my waist in mud and water most of the hunt,” he said. “He just stayed in the middle of the swamp and hopped from island to island.”

The dogs bayed up the bear a number of times throughout the day on those swamp islands. Each time, a tag-bearing hunter tried wading in close enough for a clear shot.

“The first time he stopped I got about 100 yards, but the bear caught my wind. We started pushing it north. Then another couple of hunters came in and got to a bay up, but the bear busted out again,” he said.

Later in the day, Danielson was circling around the swamp on the west side when the bear bayed up again about 400 yards away. That time Danielson got to within 10 yards of the bear.

“It was too thick, but saw it was a big bear. Then it picked up its head, and I was able to shoot it in the chest,” Danielson said.

Danielson used a .45/70 Marlin lever action rifle loaded with Remington 300-grain Core-Lokt bullets.

That bear was the group’s eighth bear of the season, and the biggest bear so far. Next biggest was a 462-pounder (live weight) that field dressed at 412 pounds. “I passed that one up in a tree a week prior. I knew we had a bigger bear around,” he said.

Group members joined forces to drag the bear about 600 yards across state land to the edge of private land where farmers let them borrow a John Deere Gator to ferry the bear out of the woods and onto the trucks.

This is Danielson’s second bear. He didn’t fill his first tag; on the second tag he shot a boar that dressed at 315 pounds. That bear was also shot on ground.

The dogs included two Plotts, a redbone and three Walkers. Once the first three dogs started the track, two dogs were added. When one dog tired and left the run, they added two more dogs.
Hunters all have their favorite methods to harvest a deer. Depending upon the time of year, each method can be productive. Confidence and experience dictate which style of hunting you prefer. Years ago, I hunted Clinton County, Pennsylvania with a mentor. He was a master of still hunting and stalking white-tailed deer and had a wall full of racks to prove it. We stayed in his hunting camp that was an old WW2 home built near Middle River, Maryland. He and his buddies bought the vintage home and moved it to Pennsylvania. The first lesson that Doug shared with me was how to move. “No more than 3 steps and always stop near a tree or rock”. We always hunted into the wind.

If we stopped to sit for a while, the spot needed to be just right. Sign, contour, other hunters, food or bedding areas were always good indicators of where to sit. He always shared his stories of finding many hunters in places where he wouldn’t stop to take a dump! This was the only hunting Doug knew and all he ever did.

Physical health will determine which style of hunting may be best for you. The size of your hunting space will also be a limiting factor. State laws will also define what styles of hunting you can choose.

Hunting from tree stands is the most popular way for modern deer hunters to hunt. Years ago, tree stands needed to be constructed by the hunter and were often death traps. 2x4’s and scrap lumber were nailed to a tree. Sometimes branches were cut and were often death traps. 2x4’s and scrap lumber tree stands needed to be constructed by the hunter. The second rule is to shoot the deer. The third rule is to go back to rule one. Place your stands or sit in areas where sign is evident. Hunting the same stand year to year will eventually become a tag less season. The forest and ecosystem changes annually. Food sources, development, hunting pressure, and population constantly change. Successful hunters change with the seasons and conditions. Many clubs I know have had the same stands in the same spots forever. The forest and areas change, mature, and evolve. Deer behavior will change as well. These hunters are relying upon luck. The veterans get first pick. Other hunters have to wait for their turn. That’s fine if you hunt one week a year and go to camp for more social reasons. Some clubs select stands using a lottery. Everyone helps to place and locate the stand sites. All of the club members share their experience, skills, and knowledge. Every site is a spot that every hunter would comfortably hunt. This is a fair way to hunt as a group. There is no substitute for experience, so it is important to learn from your mistakes. Critique why you spooked a deer, or blew an opportunity. If you take responsibility for the mistake, you can fix it. Otherwise, you will continue to not fill your tags. No matter what style of hunting you select, attitude is priceless. If you measure the success of a hunt with only a filled tag, then you will rarely be satisfied. A baseball player hits a home run less than 10% of the time. Enjoy the process of hunting and experience of the hunt. Celebrate the day whether you get a shot or not. “A lousy day of hunting is always better than a good day at work!”

Hunt safe, shoot straight, and Good Luck! Montana Grant

For more Montana Grant visit his web site at www.montanagrantfishing.com
Most anglers are familiar with the term “post release mortality” (PRM) which is used to describe a fish that dies after it has been released. While weak or erratic swimming actions will sometimes clue anglers to the fact that a particular fish they just released probably isn’t going to make it, it’s impossible to tell for certain what the fate of any fish is just by watching it swim away. Even if a fish appears healthy when it swims away from the angler who caught it, factors such as strength, stress, internal and external damage from the catch and release process, as well as predation for other fish (like sharks) all play a part in whether or not a particular fish will be able to fully recover from being caught and released.

Researchers, however, have certain tools and techniques that allow them to more accurately determine PRM in certain fisheries. One tool in particular is the pop-up satellite archival tag (PSAT). The PSAT is a device that can measure water temperature, depth, light, location, and other environmental factors. These external tags are attached to the fish by a small dart that is planted just under the skin. Usually about the size of a large cigar, these tags are usually reserved for use on larger species of fish that can carry them without complications. PSATs are programmed to release from the fish after a specific number of days and then float to the surface where they can upload their archived data to a satellite. When they can be used, PSATs are great tools for determining PRM because they will very accurately show when and where a fish has quit swimming.

At a September NMFS HMS Advisory Panel meeting in Silver Spring I was audience to a presentation by Dr. John Graves from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science about a study he and his team conducted to determine the post release mortality of white marlin in the recreational fishery. While trolling from sport fishing boats out of the Virginia Beach area the researchers caught 20 white marlin on J-hooks and 59 on circle hooks. All the marlin were tagged with PSATs and released without bringing them out of the water. After 30-days the tags released and the data showed that 7 of the 20 marlin caught on J-hooks had died, resulting in a PRM of 35%. Of the 59 circle hook caught fish only one died for a PRM of only 1.7%.

Most will agree that a 35% mortality rate of for such a valuable fish as a white marlin is way too high and should not be tolerated. On the other hand, the 1.7% PRM for circle hook caught fish is very acceptable and good testimony why anglers using dead bait for billfish should always use circle hooks.

Taking his studies one step further, Dr. Graves then tried to determine the effects of air exposure on PRM when white marlin are not released in the water but are brought out of the water as anglers sometimes do in order to have a photograph taken of them with their catch. In this study 18 white marlin where caught while trolling ballyhoo on circle hooks and all were fitted PSATs. Six marlin were brought out of the water for 1-minute, five came out for 3-minutes, and seven were out for 5-minutes. All of the marlin were laid on a wet deck with a wet towel over their head to help calm them and prevent injury while aboard. After the prescribed time all the marlin were promptly released.

The results of this study combined with the previous study where the marlin were released in the water are both eye opening and somewhat frightening. Comparing the time out of the water to the mortality rate they observed the following:
- 0-minutes out, 59 tagged, 1 died, PRM = 1.7%
- 1-minute out, 6 tagged, 1 died, PRM = 16.7%
- 3-minutes out, 5 tagged, 2 died, PRM = 40%
- 5-minutes out, 7 tagged, 3 died, PRM = 42.9%

Even though all of these fish were caught on circle hooks and, therefore, the mortality should have been very low - 33% of them died within the first 30-hours! The simple conclusion of this study is that that air exposure dramatically increases the likelihood of PRM. Dr. Graves gave an interesting analogy of why a white marlin might so often succumb to being pulled out of the water even for a short time when he asked us to imagine running as fast as we could for a long time and then have someone hold our heads underwater for a minute or so. We’d be deprived of oxygen at a critical time when our bodies needed it the most. If this study is accurate it could be that one out of every three marlin plucked out of the water for a photo-shoot ends up dying.

What does all this mean to us fishermen? We’ll, there’s a lot of evidence both online and in printed media that not all marlin are being released in the water. Many anglers might not be aware of the federal regulation requiring all HMS species (billfish, tuna, sharks, swordfish) that are released be released in the water.

Obviously, the amount of photos that show up everywhere with HMS fish out of the water, this is not a regulation the NMFS has strived to enforce. But with this new evidence of white marlin PRM the regulation could become more of a priority.

At the very least, fishermen who are now aware of the high risk to white marlin from air exposure should think twice before plucking their catch out of the water and opt instead to for a picture of the fish in the water with the proud angler leaning over the gunwale above it.
Big crappies sometimes go for small forage items in the fall.

levels to rise. Certain lakes that have dumped many inches significant rain events in the late fall that they usually do. During low light periods or overcast days, crappies may be more active in this feeding scenario. As light fades in the evening hours, zoo-plankton and phyto-plankton become active, and ascend vertically in the water column, thus becoming targets for minnows and smaller panfish. Consequently, crappies become active and feed on the minnows. Other game, such bass, pickerel or pike, may follow suit. Mixed-bag catches are possible at these times.

At these times, I try to discern what depth the weeds ‘top out’ at in the water column. It could be from 2 to 5 feet, but seldom is it more. With that in mind, I will fish jigs and minnow efforts at that depth, or slightly below. I use high end 4 pound monos, but may up to 6 pound test such as Sufix Elite for a little insurance on a 20-inch largemouth or a big slab crappie. With my aged eyes, I often go to hi-visibility Stren in florescent blue or Optic Yellow PolyFlex by Gamma to see better with watery eyes in the fall chill. I prefer pear-shaped floats by PlastiLite that are ¼ or ½ inch in length. They are yellow/orange, making them easy to see.

With this ‘fixed float’ application, I tend to make relatively short casts from 30 to 40 feet and watch the pattern of the bobber as it drifts with the wind. If it is calm, I’ll just twitch the lure slightly or give it a ‘pop’ with the rod tip to resemble a quick, fleeing effort of a live minnow in pursuit. If you are not getting at least some weeds incidentally on your jig, then you are probably not deep enough. I prefer the fixed float because I get better hooksets on the strike than with a slip bobber. I also like shorter casts so I can easily ‘read’ the movement of the bobber, and for strike detection.

Another good fall option for crappies is to fish with the wind…and that is, just find areas where the waves and wind activity may be pushing plankton and minnows along shorelines. At times like these I actually prefer to fish with the wind directly in my face and allow the surface current to do all the movement for the bobber and jig below. Crappie strikes can vary and can be difficult to see in the wind. Often, they may just trail off against the wind and not take the bobber under. At other times they may ‘pop’ once or twice and then slowly slip out of sight.

If you are not getting action or are missing strikes you may opt to scale down to a 1/64th ounce or even a 1/80th ounce jighead, as big bluegills often cruise with fall crappies. We’ve done well with the Gulp! 1 inch minnows on these tiny jigheads in recent years and catch a variety of species during most trips. The fall crappie bite is happening now and last year we caught big fish to 15 inches well into December with the mild winter. Get out when you can and try to release those larger adult fish as 10 to 12 inch crappies are ideal for fillets and fish fry’s. Yes, there is the deer, the waterfowl and the autumn sports that pry at us every year at this time. But break away for some 11th hour slabbin’ this fall!

The past few years, we have had significant rain events in the late fall period that have dumped many inches of rain in the region and caused water levels to rise. Certain lakes that have experienced drawdown find a flush of several feet of water in their basins. As reservoir levels rise, weeds that touched the surface are now flooded, with 3 to 4 feet of water over top of them. As water temperatures cool, the tops of these weeds die out sporadically, yet still provide ample ambushing opportunities for white and black crappies to chase minnows that harbor in the slightly deeper, and thicker, weeds below.

Autumn slabbin by-catch...monster bluegills!

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Autumn slabbin by-catch... monster bluegills!

A 14 inch crappie couldn’t resist a Berkley Gulp! Minnow fished on a 1/80th ounce jig head.
**November Flu**

Northern Waterfowl Fever. This fever usually rears its ugly head when one is sitting in the office looking at the weather reports from states to the North. Early symptoms include blowing duck calls on the commute to work and driving with your eyes looking skyward for new birds flying in with the front. Advanced symptoms are studying weather on the smart phone hoping for a forecast that shows wind, clouds, and a dropping barometer. This is usually followed by a phone call (remember employers can read your e-mail) from a buddy who also just looked at the same weather app and managed to scout a few ponds and fields when he was out on “sales” call. Once infected with Northern Waterfowl Fever it moves through the system rapidly, usually within 10-12 hours. The only known cure is a morning Fever it moves through the system rapidly, usually within 10-12 hours. The only known cure is a morning in the blind, with above said friend, your dog, and a thermos of coffee. The second serious ailment is best known as the rut. This rut is not to be confused with the rut that many of us get into at work, nor the rut we got the truck stuck in when trying to cure Northern Waterfowl Fever. Rut usually strikes in early November, and it gradually sneaks up on you. Early warning signs are grunt calls, rattle bags, scent bombs, and doe in heat. One day you are driving to work, passing the field and doe in heat. One day you are looking skyward for new birds fly in with the front. Advanced symptoms are studying weather on the smart phone hoping for a forecast that shows wind, clouds, and a dropping barometer. This is usually followed by a phone call (remember employers can read your e-mail) from a buddy who also just looked at the same weather app and managed to scout a few ponds and fields when he was out on “sales” call. Once infected with Northern Waterfowl Fever it moves through the system rapidly, usually within 10-12 hours. The only known cure is a morning in the blind, with above said friend, your dog, and a thermos of coffee. The second serious ailment is best known as the rut. This rut is not to be confused with the rut that many of us get into at work, nor the rut we got the truck stuck in when trying to cure Northern Waterfowl Fever. Rut usually strikes in early November, and it gradually Sneaks up on you. Early warning signs are grunt calls, rattle bags, scent bombs, and doe in heat. One day you are driving to work, passing the field and doe in heat. One day you are looking skyward for new birds fly in with the front. Advanced symptoms are studying weather on the smart phone hoping for a forecast that shows wind, clouds, and a dropping barometer. This is usually followed by a phone call (remember employers can read your e-mail) from a buddy who also just looked at the same weather app and managed to scout a few ponds and fields when he was out on “sales” call. Once infected with Northern Waterfowl Fever it moves through the system Rapidly, usually within 10-12 hours. The only known cure is a morning in the blind, with above said friend, your dog, and a thermos of coffee. The second serious ailment is best known as the rut. This rut is not to be confused with the rut that many of us get into at work, nor the rut we got the truck stuck in when trying to cure Northern Waterfowl Fever. Rut usually strikes in early November, and it gradually sneaks up on you. Early warning signs are grunt calls, rattle bags, scent bombs, and doe in heat. One day you are driving to work, passing the field that you drive by every day, and lo and behold during the middle of afternoon a nice 8 pointer is out chasing does. Before you know it, you have rut in the worse way. The only surefire cure for a case of the rut is a minimum of two to three days perched in your favorite tree stand with bow in hand. The third serious ailment to strike can best be classified as Chesapeake Bay ache. Chesapeake ache begins to show up in the population towards the end of November and may some-time run into December. Symptoms begin with conversations on fishing web sites and updates from the DNR Fishing report. Following the reports are photos e-mailed to you from your favorite charter boat captain. There is an unusual pain in the arms and legs, and a salt deficiency for those with Chesapeake ache. The only known cure for Chesapeake Bay ache is day on the Bay, dressed in your warmest clothes, chasing after large ocean run rockfish.

In the end, fear not because there are cures for November flu. They all involve spending times in Maryland’s great outdoors.

**“The Last Word”**

**November Flu**

By Steve Huettner

Havilah Babcock the great southern outdoor writer and author of “My Health is Better in November” in his outdoor classic stated that no matter how bad he felt or what was ailing him, that once November rolled around he would magically feel better. November for Mr. Babcock seemed to be a cure all. Being an outdoor writer and college professor, I am sure afforded Mr. Babcock plenty of time to enjoy the great outdoors.

For those of us who are working stiffs and have families, our time to play outside never seems to be enough. If I were ever to scribe a novel, it would be entitled November Flu. It seems that when the leaves are blowing off the trees, skies are cloudy and overcast, and there is a cold nip in the air; I am overcome with all types of ailments. If one were to look at my sick time over the course of last twenty years one would see that I am a completely healthy individual until the month of November (there is a small spike in sick time that coincides with the opening of spring rockfish and turkey season, but this is a pure coincidence).

The first ailment that arises in the month of November is called...
Venison with Brown Gravy

Ingredients

1 or 2 lbs. cubed venison
1 sm. onion diced
1 stalk celery diced
3 tbs. red wine
2 cups stock
1/2 cup butter
2 T. oil
1/2 cup flour
to taste salt
to taste pepper
to taste garlic powder or fresh garlic

Instructions

Brown meat in oil for 3-4 min. Add onions, celery, salt, pepper and garlic powder. Cook until onions and celery are lightly browned. Deglaze pan with wine. Simmer 2-3 min covered. Simmer meat for 30 min-2 hours depending on the tenderness (longer if it is less tender). Make roux. Melt butter whisk in flour. Stir with whisk until smooth.

Use whisk to stir roux into meat simmering in stock. Stir until smooth simmer until thick. Serve over noodles, rice or mashed potatoes. Tip: cook with tender cut of meat.

Book of the Month

GUN TRADER’S GUIDE, THIRTY-EIGHTH EDITION: A COMPREHENSIVE, FULLY ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO MODERN COLLECTIBLE FIREARMS WITH CURRENT MARKET VALUES

by Robert A. Sadowski (Editor)

If you are seeking a comprehensive reference for collectible gun values, the Gun Trader’s Guide is the only book you need. For more than half a century, this guide has been the standard reference for collectors, curators, dealers, shooters, and gun enthusiasts. Updated annually, it remains the definitive source for making informed decisions on used firearms purchases. Included are extensive listings for handguns, shotguns, and rifles from some of the most popular manufacturers, including Beretta, Browning, Colt, Remington, Savage, Smith & Wesson, Winchester, and many more.

This thirty-eighth edition boasts dozens of new entries since last year’s edition and includes a complete index and a guide on how to properly and effectively use this book in order to find the market value for your collectible modern firearm. Determine the new prices for any firearm you want to sell or trade, whether its condition is in box, excellent, or good. With new introductory materials that every gun collector and potential buyer should read, this book is the ultimate guide to purchasing classic or discontinued firearms. No matter what kind of modern firearm you own or collect, the Gun Trader’s Guide should remain close at hand.
FOR SALE

Baretta A390 12 ga. 3 inch DU Atlantic flyway #88 of 300 $1100. Browning A5 3 inch 12 Gauge Belgian $1100 Browning Gold Hunter 12 ga. 3 inch Belgian $700 240-338-1605

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4 – 88 Bronco II’s for sale $200 each 4wd works. Historic tags/MD titles clean – good reliable sportman vehicles, selling my collection 301-471-0505 leave voice message for Mark, shown by appointment only

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WATERFOWL SHOTGUN Browning Auto 10 Gauge Gold Stalker, 28” Barrel , 3 Choke Tubes,Black Synthetic Stock, Matte Finish. As new $800.00,....... Call 410 608 0617

For Sale: TC Omega 50 caliber muzzle- loader with Nikon Pro Staff 2x7x32 scope. Call 410-236-6350. Asking $490.00.

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www.fishingandhuntingjournal.com November 2016
A Wicomico County waterman was charged last month with harvesting and selling oysters on a suspended state tidal fish license.

Vaughn Edward Collins, 46, of Tyaskin, received a citation after an officer found that he sold 12 bushels of oysters to Southern Connection Seafood for $504 in Nanticoke Harbor.

Acting on information from the Maryland State Police, the officer collected the buy ticket and the purchase order and interviewed the mate aboard Collins’s work boat, Ali-Bri.

Collins was prohibited by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources from engaging in any commercial fishing activities from Oct. 17 to Nov. 15.

In February 2015, Collins and another waterman were caught inside the Nanticoke River Oyster Sanctuary.

Both men were charged with illegal oyster harvesting more than 150 feet inside a sanctuary; harvesting oysters before legal hours; possessing oysters onboard a vessel between two hours after sunset and before sunrise; being over the daily harvest limit; failing to tag oysters; and two charges each of possessing unculled oysters at 40 percent below legal size. Collins also was cited for operating a vessel without running lights. The 32 bushels of oysters aboard his boat were returned to the sanctuary and the dredge was seized.

In 2014, Collins was found guilty of setting commercial crab pots in a prohibited area in Wicomico County and was fined $395. He is scheduled to stand trial in January for possession of undersized blue crabs.

Collins is scheduled to appear in Wicomico County District Court Dec. 6. As a second-time offender, he must appear. The maximum penalty is a $1,000 fine and/or on year in jail.
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Jeff Foxworthy

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