



RHODE ISLAND **SALTWATER** *Anglers*

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Recreational
Anglers



IN THIS ISSUE:

IT'S SHOW TIME!

*What's to expect at
this year's RISAA
Saltwater Fishing Show*

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AND...

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2022 Annual Banquet**

RISAA member
Eddy Stahowiak with
a nice tuna on board
Big Game Charters.

PLUS:
RISAA MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

ISSUE: 287 • January/February 2023
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JANUARY

- 30 RISAA Monthly Seminar
Choosing The Right Fishing Rod
- 31 RI Marine Fisheries Council
Workshop, recreational regulations - 5pm

FEBRUARY

- 6 RI Marine Fishers Council
Workshop, mostly commercial issues, 5pm
- 18 RISAA Annual Banquet
5PM - Quonset Officers Club
- 27 RISAA Monthly Meeting
Seminar - Getting The Most Out Of A Small Boat
with Greg Vespe

MARCH

- 10-12 19th Annual New England
Saltwater Fishing Show
- 27 Seminar - Capt. Brian Bacon
of Big Game Fishing -
Offshore Pelagics

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Rhode Island Saltwater
Anglers Association

Published Monthly

RISAA, PO BOX 299, Tiverton, RI 02878

FROM THE HELM



THE BEST FOR RISAA IS YET TO COME

RISAA is heading into its 25th year with much to look forward to. We have a banquet coming up in mid-February where we get to celebrate a season well fished and some of the past year's accomplishments.

This year, we have two team fishing tournaments planned, a new youth species identification and release challenge event, and our crown jewel, the New England Saltwater Fishing Show in March to look forward to. Not to mention our ongoing partnership with RIDEM for Kids Fishing Camp and other events to expose local youth and families to saltwater fishing.

Overall we had a heck of a year with advances in regional fisheries policies, and we continue to advocate towards responsible stewardship of recreational fish. Whether that means adjusting the seasons so that more anglers can participate, or adjusting the bag limits so anglers can continue to participate in a fishery for years to come, we will be there to make sure RISAA members are being represented.

Of course that does still mean there will be times that not everyone within RISAA supports a particular cause or position. I get that and it's okay. Beyond good sportsmanship there is no litmus test for RISAA members. We all fish differently and have different views. This is particularly so because we all fall on a different spot along the continuum of our fishing careers. What's important to a new angler in the community may not match up with what is important to a seasoned Captain, nor with someone trying to establish herself or himself on a fishing career path, or with a grandparent who is thinking about the future generations and what might be left for them.

Finding the middle ground where the majority of us can support a position and allowing everyone to be heard is my job. Some days I get that right better than others, but I think 2023 holds much promise for us to continue to represent our membership effectively.

Moving forward our Club's head boat trips remain a popular activity and allows even those members with their own boats a chance to get out and enjoy each other's company and perspective on things. We need to continue to add new members and continue to encourage diversity within our ranks not only so we continue to represent the angling community effectively but also because many of our original founding members are getting to the point where they are having to step back a bit from much of their participation in the club. Our ability to run the Fishing Show as well as our other club events remains ever tied to our members helping out where they are able. So please consider being a part of the Show volunteer committee as well as our seminar and special events teams. If you volunteer, my job is to make sure it's a fun and rewarding experience, so put me to work in 2023.

Tight lines and Catch em up,

Greg **VESPE**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



RI SALTWATER ANGLERS ASSOCIATION
Legislative Committee

Reported by: Richard **Hittinger**, CHAIRMAN

WORKING FOR RECREATIONAL ANGLERS ALL WINTER

We have a lot to keep track of this winter as usual. In addition to tracking all local saltwater fishing regulations for 2023, we have the constant battle to try to keep public access points open for recreational anglers, monitor regional councils making rules about the future for fluke, black sea bass and scup, not to mention the ASMFC making policy regarding striped bass, menhaden and other species important to all RISAA members. On top of that we have to watch proposals for offshore wind development, including cables running to shore and how aquaculture development could impact our fishing grounds. It seems that we can always use more help tracking and commenting on all of these issues, especially when commercial fishing interests have many people hired to monitor these issues full time.

Some of the specific issues that we are working on at the time that I write this column are:

We are closely monitoring proposals to install high-power, high voltage cables along the length of the Sakonnet River to bring up to 2,400 megawatts (MW), or enough to power over 800,000 homes from the offshore turbines to the former Brayton Point Power Station to connect into the electric grid. This is of concern because the project could harm an area of critical concern for juvenile cod while an over-land route is available that would totally avoid these potential impacts.

We are finalizing our comments to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) regarding their proposed Addendum 1 to Amendment 7 for striped bass. We are opposed to their proposal to allow quota transfers between states that would allow greater commercial harvest of striped bass. Such transfers have never been allowed in the past, and the fact that ASMFC is considering allowing these transfers now, while striped bass is still in a rebuilding plan is totally senseless to us.

We are actively supporting the RI Attorney General's office in their effort to assure that CRMC does their job and opens the Spring Avenue extension in Westerly, RI for public access. This access location was historically a public access point to miles of beach but, in recent years has been taken over by a homeowner's group that call themselves the Weekapaug Fire District even though they have nothing to do with fire protection. The AG's office is pushing to have this opened back up to all people, including fishermen.

A few of us will be attending the inaugural Northeast Cooperative Research Summits that will be held in Providence on February 15, 2023. We will attempt to assure that the cooperative fisheries research being conducted in the northeast region includes projects



that will protect access to good fishing for all recreational anglers.

We are working with Rhode Island legislators to modify current laws that prohibit fishing for crabs at night. Since this prohibition has no specific purpose as far as we can determine, and since night is the best time to catch crabs, we see no reason that this prohibition needs to be in law. Rather, we believe that the RIDEM should control crabbing through regulations.

We are actively involved in review of the Revolution Wind project (Rev) for Federal Consistency. This project is proposed to be built within 15 miles of shore, south of Newport and Little Compton. It is proposed to extend across many rock piles north and west of Cox Ledge all the way down onto Cox Ledge where it will meet the South Fork Wind project which has already been permitted by RI CRMC and the Federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). Recent reports that show that CO2 emissions reductions from Rev will be minimal at best making this potential impact to our offshore fishing grounds even more disappointing. These reports show that it will take at least 8 to as many as 12 years of full operation of Rev just to reduce CO2 emissions enough to make up for the CO2 emitted to construct the project.

(Continued on page 10)

THE WELCOME COMMITTEE

Dawn Filliatreault Wood, CHAIR



Welcome NEW Members!

Jaehyun Byun - Amherst, MA

Scott Crain - Portsmouth, RI

George DiGregorio - Milford, MA

Mark Fleury - East Greenwich, RI

Daphne Forster - Newport, RI

Alyssa Grayson - Coventry, RI

Shaun Heffernan - North Branford, CT

Athena Hittinger - Rochester, NY

Michael Lawing - Richmond, RI

John Lee - Wakefield, RI

William Levin - Holliston, MA

Helen Matteson - East Greenwich, RI

Philip Matteson - West Kingstown, RI*

David Quaglieri - Somersworth, NH

Michael Raymond - Harrisville, RI

Steve Sabetta - Cranston, RI

John Silva - Bristol, RI*

John Valentine - West Boylston, MA

**LIFE MEMBERS*

The purpose of the Welcome Committee is to contact new members, welcome them to the Association and answer any questions they may have about RISAA and its activities.

MEMBER PHOTOS



Mark Tracey fishing the Providence River with a 34" striper, caught on a 9 Inch Doc.



Hayes Jansen with his Yearlong Tournament winning mahi mahi.

RISAA Welcomes its 29TH Affiliate Club



RISAA is proud to welcome its 29th Affiliate Club. In a unanimous vote the RISAA Board has accepted the **Seaconnet Sportsman's Club** application as an affiliate member.

Formed in 1946 this club is 77 years old and represents one of the oldest continuously operating saltwater fishing clubs in New England. The Club carries 300 members as well as a waiting list to join. Their base of operations is the Sakonnet region and in addition to promoting saltwater fishing as a recreational activity they host youth fishing tournaments, participate in conservation projects and are active in charity activities as well as serving as host site for community functions.

RISAA would like to officially welcome them as an affiliate club.

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COOKING YOUR CATCH

By: Paula Smalec

FLO'S CLAMS CASINO



This is an excellent recipe for clams casino! When I make these, I need to increase the baking time from 10 minutes to 18 minutes, and your own oven may vary even more. You can make these ahead of time and keep them briefly in the refrigerator before baking them. In that instance, add a few more minutes to your adjusted baking time.

This recipe appears on the Food Network website (<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/flos-clams-casino-recipe-1915267>), and was provided by Komes Rozes, the owner of Flo's Clam Shack in Middletown, RI.

INGREDIENTS:

- 16 littleneck clams
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 1 lemon, juiced
- ¼ cup chopped parsley, plus more for garnish
- several dashes hot pepper sauce, to taste
- ¼ cup diced onion
- ¼ cup diced green pepper
- ¼ cup diced red pepper
- ½ cup crushed crackers (recommend Ritz crackers)
- 4 strips bacon, par-cooked (slightly less than half done)
- lemon wedges, for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
Shuck and drain clams and set aside.
In a sauté pan, combine melted butter, lemon juice, parsley, and hot pepper sauce over medium heat.
Add onions, green peppers, and red peppers and sauce until tender.
Add the crushed crackers and mix until thoroughly combined.
Cut each par-cooked bacon strip into 4 equal pieces.
Spoon a small amount of the mixture on top of littlenecks and then top with a piece of bacon.
Bake for about 10 minutes, or until the bacon is crispy.
Garnish with parsley and lemon wedges.

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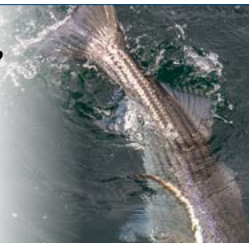
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SOME FISHING REGULATIONS TO TIGHTEN

By: Captain Dave Monti

Fishing regulations for summer flounder (fluke), black sea bass and scup will likely become more conservative for 2023. Harvest limit reductions for recreational fishing will likely be reduced by as much as 10 percent.

At press time NOAA Fisheries announced their approval of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's recommended 2023 summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass specifications. In December 2021, the Council and Board adopted revised quota allocations for the commercial and recreational sectors of these three fisheries as part of the Commercial-Recreational Allocation Amendment (Amendment 22).

What these coastwide reductions mean for regulations in each state remains to be seen. Reductions will be worked through this winter via individual state fishing governing bodies. For example, in Rhode Island the RI Marine Fisheries Council process is expected to finalize regulations late March or the first week of April.

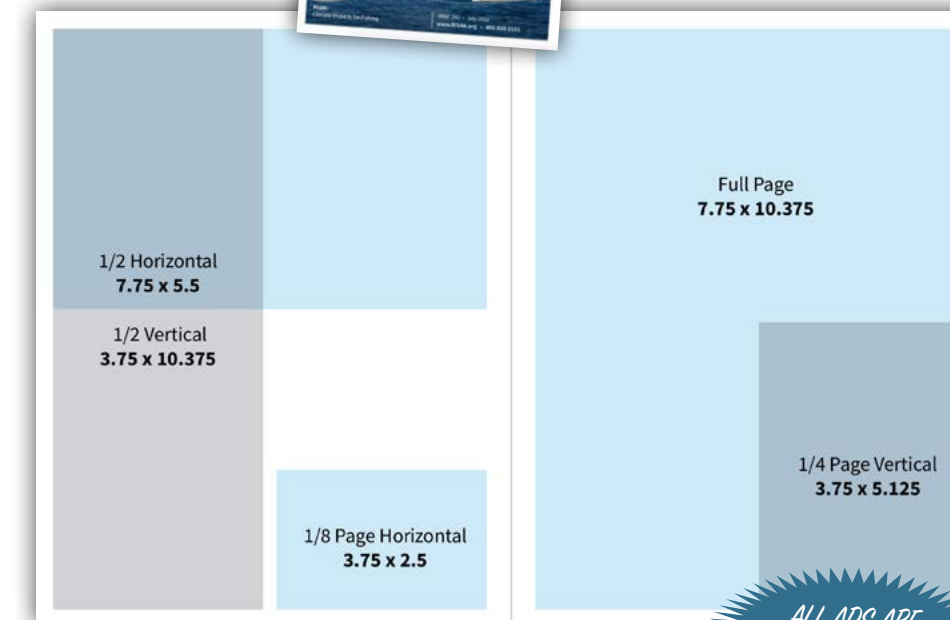
No striped bass or bluefish changes are expected, and more than likely it will be status quo for tautog in Rhode Island based on Massachusetts adopting the trophy fish regulations already in place in Rhode Island.



Advertise with RISAA

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Below are the ad rates for 2023 as well as size specifications and other information. Contact RISAA at 401-826-2121 if you have further questions.



AD SIZE	NON-MEMBER	MEMBER
Full Page	\$470	\$360
1/2 Page	\$290	\$240
1/4 Page	\$195	\$150
1/8 Page	\$140	\$105

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AD DIMENSIONS

Full Page.....	7.75 x 10.375
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Ad Size Full Page 1/2 Page 1/4 Page 1/8 age

Length One Issue 3 Months 6 Months 1 Year

Payment Check Enclosed Send Bill Monthly Amount Enclosed _____

If you want to PAY BY CREDIT CARD, please call Greg Vespe directly at (401) 662-5573.

I am interested in participating in the New England Saltwater Fishing Show

I am interested in doing a seminar at a RISAA monthly meeting. Topic: _____

ATTACH A BUSINESS CARD!

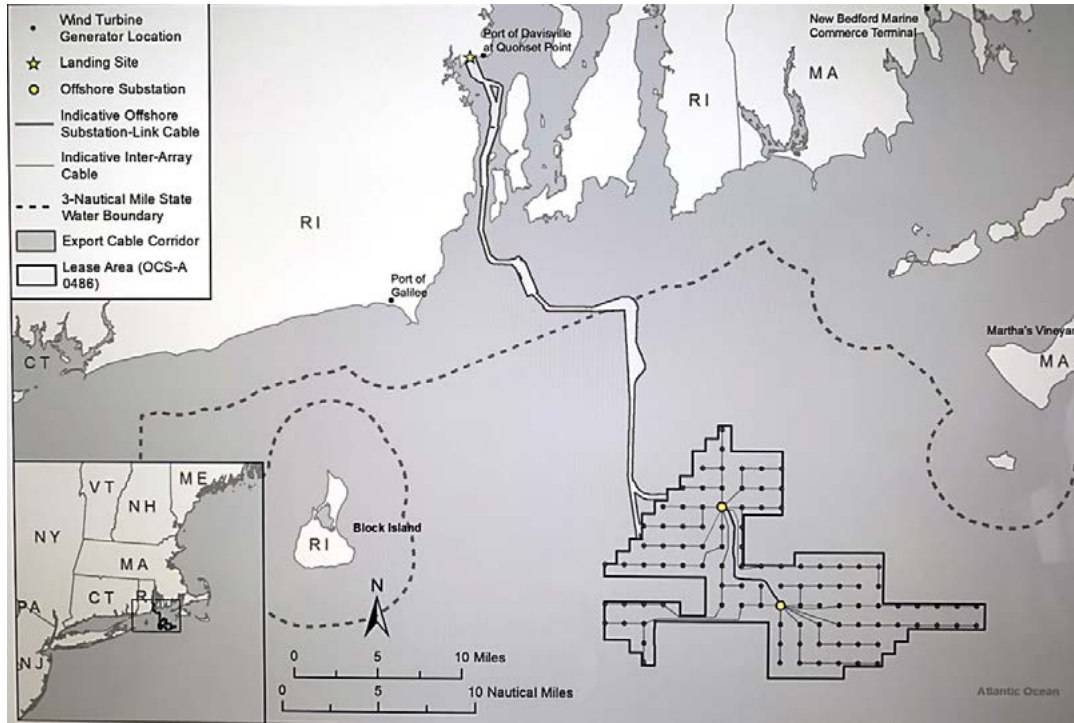
Ad Deadline: 15th of preceding month

We are actively working to assure that monies from OWE developers paid into funds to mitigate damage done to fishermen are properly managed and that some of these funds are used for projects to help recreational fishing over the next decade or longer.

We are pushing for Bills in the RI Statehouse this session to protect public access and to improve the structure and operation of CRMC. These Bills were introduced very late in the session in 2022 and were not heard due to other Bills taking priority.

We are closely following implementation of a Recreational Harvest Control Rule (HCR) by ASMFC and the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC). We are in favor of this HCR as long as there is still adequate protection of fish populations going forward. The idea is to change some of the basic rules that led to allowing greater harvest of fluke in recent years while harvest of black sea bass and scup were further restricted. As we all know, there are many BSB and scup to catch, but getting legal sized fluke has been a challenge recently.

On top of these specific items listed above we continue to work with RI Sea Grant, CRMC, and various RIDEM programs to give RISAA members a voice in how our fiscal resources are used to aid the marine environment and how regulations are implemented to protect the marine environment. If you are interested in any of the topics listed above and want to lend a hand send me an email at hittinger@risaa.org.



“We are pushing for Bills in the RI Statehouse this session to protect public access and to improve the structure and operation of CRMC.”

JOIN RISAA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

All RISAA members are welcome to join the RISAA Legislative Committee. If you are interested send an email to me at hittinger@risaa.org and we will send you the link (via email) to the next Legislative meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for February 23 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

RISAA MEMBERS HAVE SPOKEN

By: Fred DeFinis

At the end of 2022 we conducted a member survey to help determine member motivation and satisfaction with the club and to help guide future direction. A whopping three hundred plus club members participated in the survey with a 100% completion rate. While boat-based anglers were the largest segment, we had great participation from our shore, kayak and fly anglers as well.

MEMBER SATISFACTION IS HIGH

In nearly every measure, members ranked RISAA over ninety percent in delivering on a variety of values. At the top of the list at 97% is RISAA's work in advocating for recreational angling. Members feel that RISAA has helped make them aware of conservation issues and they appreciate the work being done on the conservation and advocacy fronts. Members are also comfortable that they find RISAA a welcoming organization and feel the club would welcome any members of any background.

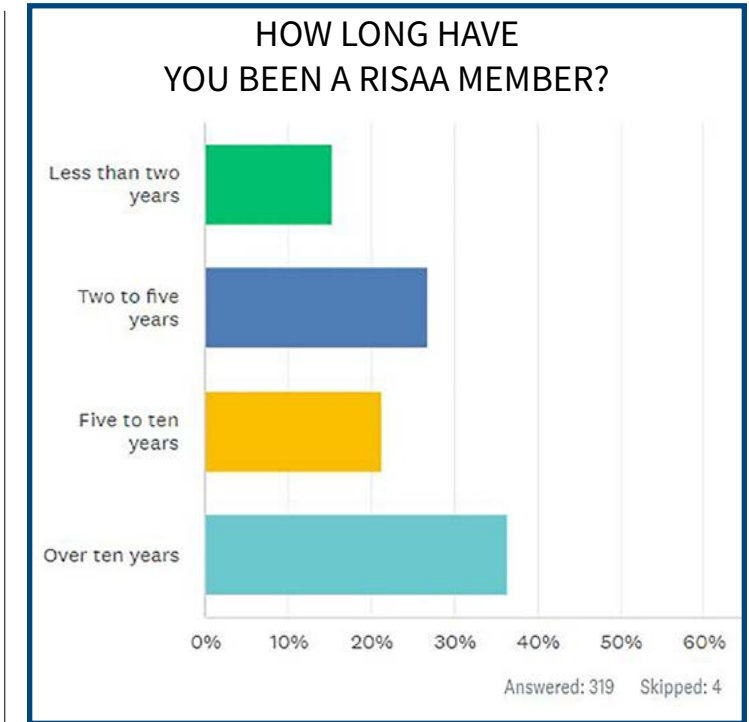
One area in which we failed to get an “A” grade was in helping our members become better anglers. While members gave the club a solid “B+” in this area, we can and will do better.

MEMBER MOTIVATIONS

While some members joined RISAA to participate in specific activities such as tournaments or kayak fishing, the vast majority gave three main reasons for joining RISAA

- To improve their skills as anglers 83%
- To meet other anglers 58%
- To add their voice in conservation issues 37%

In looking at individual responses and comments, members offered a number of ways to work towards these goals. In improving their skills they suggest multi-media approaches such



as YouTube videos or using the club website. They also like the idea of “hands-on” type demonstrations or activities that they can participate in or view. This is consistent with the findings of our earlier survey on the newsletter which led to significant changes in the format and content. It seems members want this approach extended to programs and activities as well. As far as meeting other anglers is concerned, members are looking for group trips, “member match” and similar activities in which they can meet people from their region or for their particular type of fishing.

(Continued on page 12)

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Desire to meet other anglers	58.39%	188
Desire to improve my angling skills or knowledge	82.30%	265
Desire to add my voice in conservation or other important issues	36.96%	119
Desire to participate in a particular activity such as kayak, surf or fly fishing groups	26.71%	86
Desire to participate in group trips	23.91%	77
Desire to participate in tournaments such as the Year Long tournament	17.39%	56
Other (please specify)	Responses 13.04%	42
Total Respondents: 322		

AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION IN CLUB ACTIVITIES

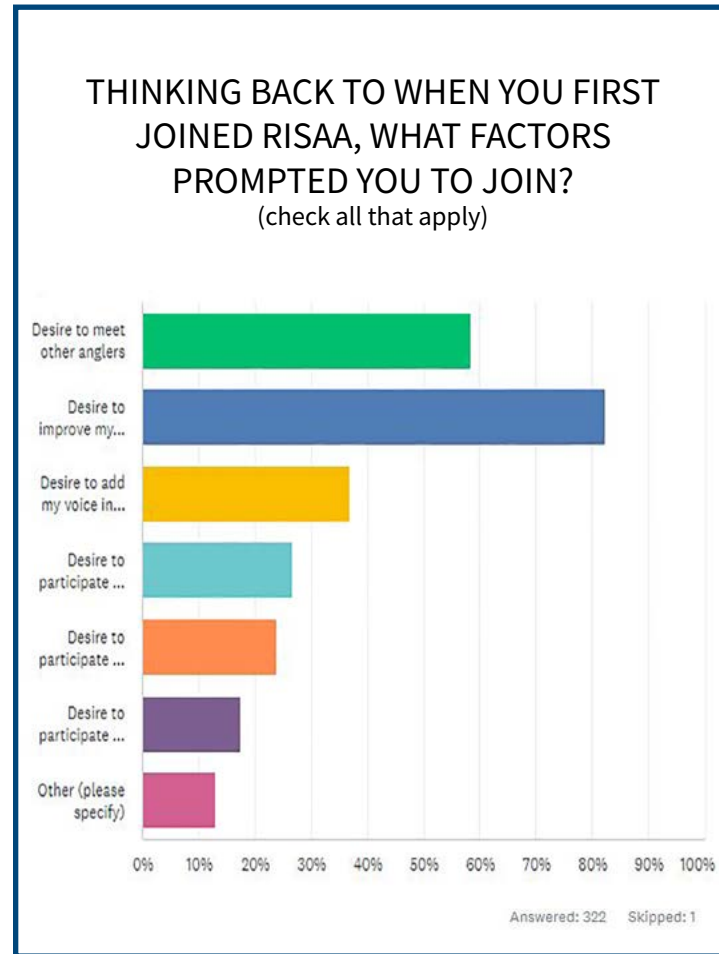
For the most part, members are aware of club activities such as the group party boat trips, sub-committees such as surf or kayak groups, charter and merchandise raffles, etc. but only a minority have participated. Generally, less than one-third of members have participated in these activities. The same is true of the monthly meetings/seminars—count the heads and you will see that participation is slim. The main reasons more members don't participate in club activities, especially the meetings/seminars are schedule or logistical conflicts. Depending on jobs, family obligations and location, it can be difficult to get out on a Monday evening to participate in the meeting and the activities that go with it. This is an area that we need to explore more and find newer or better ways to engage our membership.



Youth initiatives like fishing camp are well supported by members.

YOU ARE THE KEY TO RISAA

The two main ways members became aware of RISAA were through a friend or relative (39%) or through the Saltwater Fishing Show (31%). A few more (14%) became aware of RISAA by picking up a copy of the monthly magazine somewhere, likely a participating tackle shop. If we want our club to grow in influence so that we can protect saltwater angling for future generations, we need to expand our numbers. You can help by talking up RISAA to your friends, at your marina or favorite shore fishing spot or wherever. I have found that giving someone a recent copy of the magazine is a good “icebreaker” for recruiting members. Also consider volunteering for a shift at the Saltwater Fishing Show to help recruit new members. The statement “I would not hesitate to recommend RISAA to a friend” scored 98% on the survey so each of us should be able to recruit a new member.



CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENTS

While the numbers tell us much about our members, it is their comments that give us insight into their thinking and feelings. Some common themes that resonate are:

- Desire for more instructional and hands-on content and activities
- Desire for more inclusion of anglers who don't own boats
- Desire for more youth and family activities

There is a common misperception that RISAA is “a club for old guys” or “a club for people who own boats”, neither of which is true, although it seems that those are some, but not all of our most visible and involved members. The club welcomes all members and their ideas and suggestions, as well as help in implementing new programs and activities.

NEXT STEPS

The RISAA Board of Directors and Executive Committee will be reviewing survey result, using findings to conduct further research as needed and incorporate key leanings into strategic plans and initiatives moving forward.

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LEARNING MORE ABOUT FALSE ALBACORE

By: Captain Dave Monti



False albacore have grown in stature as a highly targeted recreational sport fish. These speedsters have thrilled shore and boat anglers, and have become a valuable addition to the recreational community. The bait or forage profile for false albacore are here in greater abundance due to climate change and warming water, and have brought a greater abundance of these fish to the northeast region.

During the 2022 University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography Baird Symposium on 'Climate impacts on recreational fishing and boating', anglers, charter captains and scientists alike participating as panelists pointed to false albacore as a data poor recreational fish that has little commercial fishing value. Often times recreational species that are not commercially harvested have taken a back seat to commercially harvested species with little research being done or explored by fish managers and supporting scientists.

The American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA), Baird Symposium participants, identified this need and did something about data poor false albacore. This year ASGA spearheaded The Albie Project, where 63 acoustic tags were deployed into false albacore that were throughout Nantucket Sound. The aim of the study was to learn more about false albacore movement and mortality.

The study was spearheaded by Dr. Jeffrey Kneebone of the New England Aquarium who has conducted acoustic tag studies on sharks, bluefin tuna, yellow fin tuna and a number of other species.

Tony Friedrich, Vice President and Policy Director of the ASGA said, "A quarter of a million-dollar project comes with a great deal of responsibility. The folks at the New England Aquarium had to

“The aim of the study was to learn more about false albacore movement and mortality.”

develop, design, and build a contraption that would immobilize and properly position the albies for tag surgery while flushing sea water over their gills.”

Sponsors for the project included offshore wind farm developers Ørsted and Vineyard Wind as well as fishing gear and tackle manufacturers/businesses such as Costa, Old Maine Outfitters, Cheeky, Hoky, Simms, Van Stall, The Saltwater Edge as well as the New England Aquarium and the American Saltwater Guides Association.

Friedrich said, “We had some big concerns as we heard from doubters who claimed ‘False albacore bleed everywhere, most fish die when they are caught. These fish will die too.’ and ‘A tag that size is going to impede a fast-moving fish’s movement.’ Many said the project would not work.” said Friedrich. “So when we received an email from Dr. Jeff Kneebone in early December that was busting at the seams with data, our jaws dropped. The tagging



The New England Aquarium developed, designed, and built a contraption that would immobilize and properly position albies for tag surgery while flushing sea water over their gills.

Photos courtesy of the ASGA.

effort worked – even better than we could’ve ever imagined.”

Dr. Jeff Kneebone said, “We had 57 fish, about 90 percent survive and start sending us data. The project focusing on Nantucket Sound worked well allowing us to place receivers throughout the Sound. Even though some were miles apart, fish were sending us a lot of data. These fish are truly energizer bunnies, they keep moving. So in addition to proving these fish can be successfully tagged with acoustic telemetry tags, we were able to see just how much they move around.”

Friedrich said, “In one two week period in September, 50 separate fish had a total of 4,935 detections. We had as many as 601 detections from one fish. These preliminary results are so robust we have aligned study sponsors for another year and will be doing it again in 2023.”

Dr. Kneebone concluded, “We plan to add accelerators into the mix in 2023 so we can tell just how fast the fish move and to make sure they are alive and not dead in the belly of a shark or some other fish. We also plan to extend our study as last year when we stopped the study at the end of October we still had quite a few false albacore in the region.”

Hats off to the American Saltwater Guides Association for doing the false albacore study. It has and will continue to demonstrate the value of doing research on data poor recreational species. The study will lead us to protect these and other species in the future growing them to abundance so there are more of them in the water for recreational anglers to catch, release and/or eat (depending on the species).

Join the Albie Tag Team and support ASGA's efforts to learn more about and protect false albacore for generations to come. Sponsorship supports one of the acoustic telemetry tags attached to a little tunny – deployed by ASGA in partnership with the New England Aquarium. All Tag Teams sponsors will receive an exclusive Albie Project “Tag Team” hooded tech shirt produced by SIMMS. 🐟

SUPPORT LOCAL BAIT SHOPS THAT SUPPORT RISAA!



RISAA is lucky to have such great local bait and tackle shops that support us and our members. When making purchases please keep them in mind as without them many of our club activities would struggle to take place and they are an integral part of RI recreational fishing.

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- Quonny Bait & Tackle - Charlestown, RI
- Riverside Marine Bait & Tackle - Tiverton, RI
- Saltwater Edge - Middletown, RI
- Sams' Bait & Tackle - Middletown, RI
- Snug Harbor - Wakefield, RI
- Tackle Box - Warwick, RI
- Weakapauge Bait & Tackle - Westerly, RI

18th Annual MEMBERS BANQUET

Join Us To Celebrate RISAA & A Season Well Fished!



Mark Your Calendar!

February 18, 2023
5pm-9pm

Location Quonset O Club
North Kingstown RI

\$30 per Adult • \$15 (under 14)

Food • Awards • Special Prizes • Raffles

For 25 plus years, RISAA has continued to lead the way for Recreational fishermen in New England. Now it's time to celebrate another season well fished! Guests are welcome to join in the fun and let's get RISAA of to a great start in 2023!

SIGN-UP on the RISAA web site (members section) or contact: Greg Vespe at vespe.risaa@gmail.com



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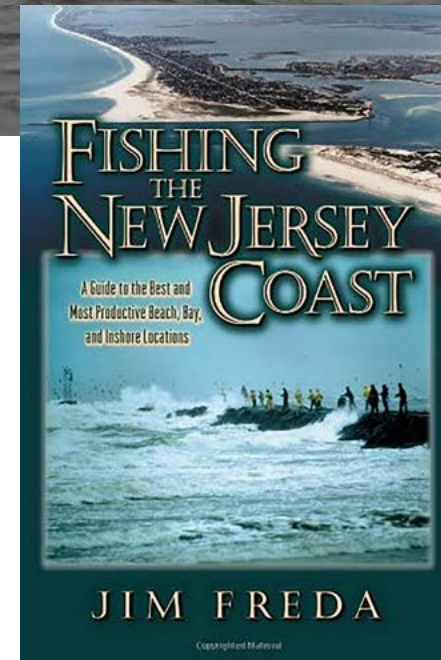
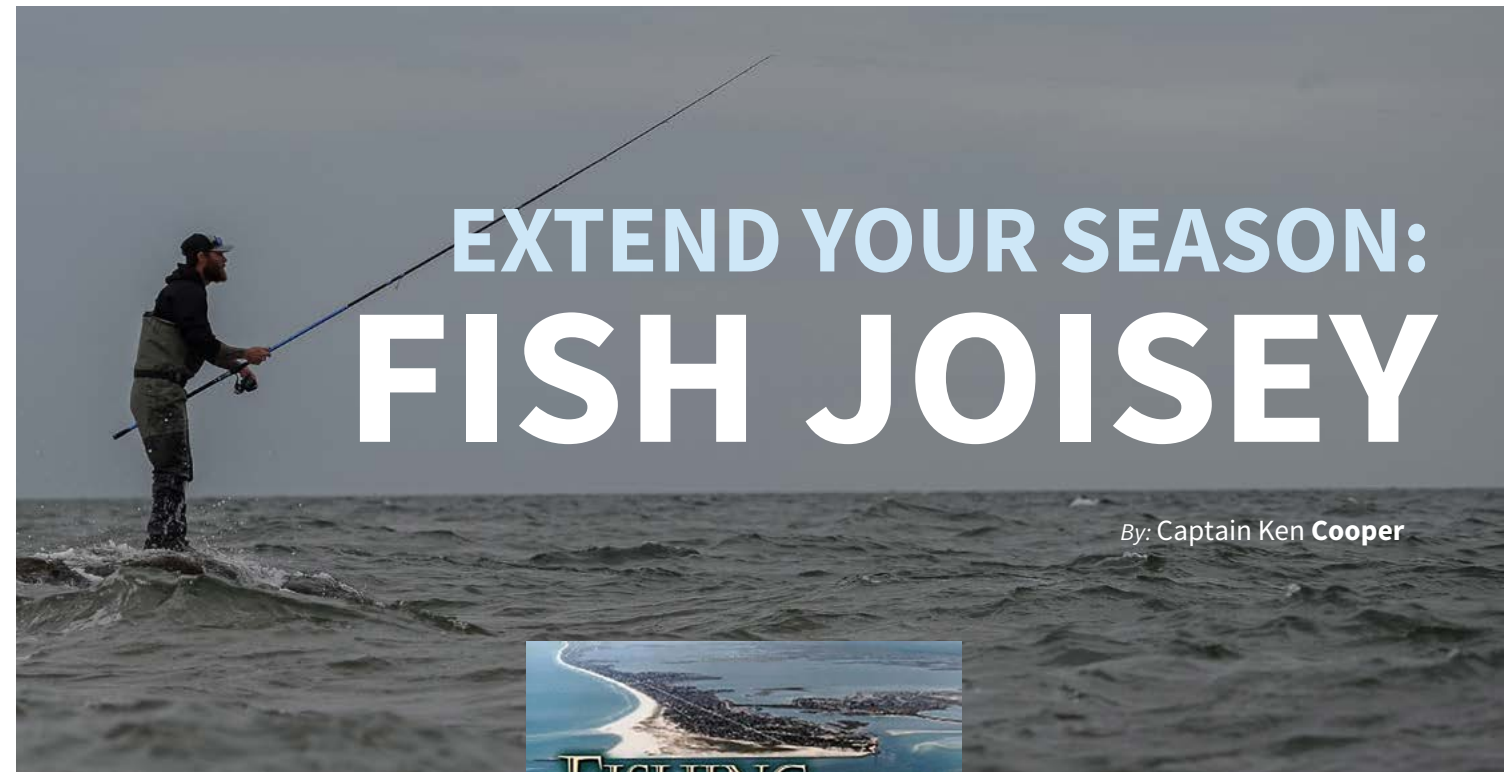


76 Taunton Street
Plainville, MA 02762



EXTEND YOUR SEASON: FISH JOISEY

By: Captain Ken Cooper



It took me several seasons of fishing and spearfishing in late April and early May around Westerly, RI, to finally admit to myself that decent size striped bass did not show up on the Watch Hill area reefs until late May, when the ocean temperature reliably hit or exceeded 55 degrees. Of course there were early arrival schoolies in mid-April, and similar stripers feasting on the worm hatches of early May, but my local ocean waters did not consistently light up until Memorial Day or even June 1st rolled around.

At the other end of the season, I came to accept that most of the keeper stripers were gone by Halloween, and that the waves of bass that blitzed our local beaches into mid-November were virtually all schoolies. There were surely plenty of bigger stripers to be caught in the early spring and late fall, just not around South County, Rhode Island.

So where are they, you ask? Why New Jersey, of course. If you want to extend your striper season at either or both ends, head to the Jersey shore. But before you do, visit www.njsaltwaterfisherman.com. This site is an excellent resource. New Jersey does not require recreational striped bass fishermen to possess a saltwater fishing license, but the state does require that you register. Registration is free, good for the entire calendar year, and there is a convenient link on the site to the required form. Once registered, download and print the card to keep with you when fishing.

If you are going to trailer your boat, go to the NJ Saltwater Fisherman website, above, for a comprehensive list of launch ramps. From personal experience, to fish the Sandy Hook/Raritan Bay area, you can launch out of Atlantic Highlands. For the Jetties area, launch from Shark River or Manasquan River inlets. And for Island Beach State Park, launch from Toms River or Barnegat on the western shore of Barnegat Bay.

If you have a suitable over sand vehicle and want to drive the beach, particularly at Island Beach State Park, you will find links to regulations and information on the NJ Saltwater Fisherman website, as well as at www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/parks/islandbeach-statepark (official site) and www.islandbeachnj.org.

Now, a word about bait. In the early spring, meaning April into May, from boat or shore, use clams, and the fresher the better. If you are going to fish with bait, including clams, use circle hooks. Sandeels used to be the primary bait from late April into December, and if they show up in numbers, the preferred lure from boat or beach is a chrome AVA jig (or similar) dressed with a rubber tube tail in green, white, red or yellow, until late in the season when needlefish plugs are effective. More recently, thanks largely to restrictions on harvesting, adult and juvenile menhaden (aka bunker and peanut bunker) abound. Find the bunker and you will likely find the bass. From the boat, BKD soft plastic lures, as well as the new flutter spoons, are becoming increasingly popular when the stripers are holding below sur-

(Continued on page 18)

face, and all the usual surface lures that are familiar to RISAA members—poppers, spooks and pencil poppers—will get the job done if the bass are busting on top.

From the beach, the same plugs and soft plastics, especially paddle tails, are effective. For fly fishing around adult bunker schools, think big—like Bob Popoviks' Beast Fly big—eight to ten inches, or even twelve inches long and full bodied. When the bait is smaller “peanuts,” then a four to six inch Bucktail Deceiver pattern will work.

When I think about fishing for striped bass on the Jersey shore, I am reminded of the opening line of Julius Caesar's historic treatise on his conquests: Omnia Galia est divisa in partes tres. All Gaul (current France) is divided into three parts. Similarly, for capturing striped bass, the New Jersey coast can be divided into three parts, from north to south: Sandy Hook and Raritan Bay; the Jetties; and Island Beach State Park and Barnegat Bay.

SANDY HOOK AND RARITAN BAY

Sandy Hook is a six mile long, mostly narrow sand spit that extends north from the hamlet of Highlands into Raritan Bay. It is part of the Gateway National Recreation Area administered by the federal government. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, there is a \$20 daily fee for beach parking, but no charge during the spring and fall fishing seasons of interest here. The east shore opens to the Atlantic Ocean while the west side of the peninsula fronts on the more sheltered waters of Raritan Bay. There is a well defined tidal rip at the north end of the Hook, and fishing there is not only very productive at times, but also visually rewarding with views of Staten Island, lower Manhattan, and large ocean-going vessels passing surprisingly close by. Striped bass could be active anywhere along the shore. Binoculars will help to spot active birds or other signs of fish as you drive from one parking area to the next. Be prepared to do quite a bit of walking in your waders, and carry everything you need, including drinking water, sunscreen and insect repellent.

From the boat, look for active birds and search your fish finder screen for schools of bait. Not every school of bait will have

bass, but it's unlikely to find active bass where there are no bait schools. Quite often the bait is adjacent to the channels, so keep an eye on your chart plotter's map to find the likely locations. Mike Smedley has a very helpful and tantalizing group of videos depicting fishing on Raritan Bay on his YouTube channel, and I urge you to check them out.

THE JETTIES

South of Sandy Hook, from about Long Branch to Point Pleasant, you will find a seemingly endless line of mostly short and often crumbling jetties or grinds protruding into the Atlantic. The distance between the rock piles varies, but likely averages one hundred yards. If you want to fish from just about any of these jetties, you must absolutely wear Korkers, have excellent balance and agility, and have a good deal of bravado. As with any rock pile structure, some jetties fish better than others, and the more productive ones can get crowded, like shoulder-to-shoulder crowded, when bass are blitzing. During the fall migration, in late November into early December, the stripers are typically moving fast, only stopping when and where there is sufficient bait to hold their attention. In response, surf fishermen chose their starting point based on a tip from a friend, current conditions, or past experience, and then check in by cell phone with pals fishing other locations, or scan the beach with binoculars to find the feeding fish. Driving on the beach is generally not permitted along this stretch of the coast, and so it's a matter of getting in your parked car or truck and driving to the beach access point closest to the action, finding a parking spot and racing to the shore.

Boaters will look for active birds or tight groups of other boats. There is some structure along this stretch, like the Shrewsbury Rocks, that could hold bait and fish, but mostly you will be searching for the birds or following the fleet. If the bass are tight to the beach, don't crowd the surfcasters. There are some who will change their offering from a lure to a six or eight ounce sinker to teach you a lesson in maintaining proper social distance.



ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK AND BARNEGAT BAY

IBSP includes the near ten mile long southern end of a pristine barrier beach that runs from Seaside Heights to Barnegat Inlet. This narrow strip of land faces the open Atlantic on the east and the more sheltered Barnegat Bay on the west. There is a daily entrance fee of \$20 per vehicle from Memorial Day to Labor Day. A paved road extends from the Park entrance to about 1.5 miles from the southern tip of the island, and there is a series of paved parking areas with beach and Bay access along this road. Over-sand vehicles with a permit are allowed on most of the Park's ocean shoreline. Good fishing may be found anywhere along the beach, but the “pocket” at the south end of the Park can be phenomenal under the right conditions. The pocket is formed where the beach meets the jetty that runs along Barnegat Inlet.

If you are going to fish IBSP, you need to stop in at Betty & Nick's Bait and Tackle, located just outside the Park entrance at 807 SW Central Avenue, Seaside Park, (732) 793-2708, www.betty-nicks.com. More than a tackle shop, this place includes a diner and has been a local institution for over fifty years. Check out the website for current fishing conditions and fishing reports. And while you are on your computer, visit the Atlantic Saltwater Flyrodders website, www.ASWF.info. This club, orig-

inated by well-known New Jersey restaurant owner, fly tier and author Bob Popoviks, has a library of fishing and fly tying videos available online that are a must-see before venturing out to fish IBSP.

Barnegat Bay is better known for bluefish and weakfish than striped bass, but fly fishers, in particular, can do well on stripers early and late in the season along the Park's southwest shore. Barnegat Inlet can provide outstanding action on bass, blues and false albacore in the fall. The inlet is bordered by long jetties (what we call walls in Rhode Island), and the iconic Barnegat Light dominates the view to the south, across the Inlet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This has been but a brief overview of fishing the New Jersey shore. I can recommend two books that will give you a more in-depth account of the subject, and both are available on Amazon.com: *Fishing the New Jersey Coast* by Jim Freda, and *The New Jersey Boat Fisherman* by Nick Honachefsky. If you want to engage a fishing guide, I can recommend Shore Catch Guide Service, (732) 600-3297, www.shorecatch.com.

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Winning Fluke Boat Division



BOB MATTESON - Triggerfish Division
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BLACK SEA BASS
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Capt. Richard Hittinger6.10 lbs
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Domenic Bianco2.87 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - ADULT
Michael Tilelli.....3.22 lbs
BLUEFISH
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Thomas Houde13.05 lbs
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Domenic Bianco12.33 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - ADULT
John Migliori..... 13.32 lbs
BONITO
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
David Garzoli9.30 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - ADULT
Michael Tilelli.....4.91 lbs
COD
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Paul Boutiette7.78 lbs
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Flynn Jansen3.30 lbs

FALSE ALBACORE
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Ronald Lynch.....7.56 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - ADULT
Michael Tilelli11.16 lbs
FLUKE
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
John Meserve12.00 lbs
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Tucker Jansen8.70 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - ADULT
Michael Tilelli2.20 lbs
MAHI MAHI
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Hayes Jansen1.34 lbs
POLLOCK
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Michael Tilelli16.00 lbs
TAUTOG
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Dariusz Kolodziejczak11.10 lbs
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Domwnic Bianco4.76 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - ADULT
John Migliori.....8.35 lbs

SCUP
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Robert Sangster.....3.72 lbs
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Domenic Bianco1.44 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - ADULT
John Migliori.....2.64 lbs
SEA ROBIN
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Peter Chang 2.69 lbs
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Tucker Jansen1.78 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - ADULT
John Migliori.....2.76 lbs
SHORE DIVISION - JUNIOR
Luke Lamson1.28 lbs
GRAY TRIGGERFISH
BOAT DIVISION - ADULT
Robert Matteson3.44 lbs
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Luke Lamson3.40 lbs
TUNA - BLUEFIN
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Luke Lamson48.52 lbs
TUNA - YELLOWFIN
BOAT DIVISION - JUNIOR
Luke Lamson13.22 lbs

RISAA Fishing Tournament Update & Schedule For 2023

Where to start? The RISAA tournaments committee met this winter with the overriding goal to provide friendly competition events that create Esprit **Décor**, camaraderie and excitement among RISAA members. To accomplish this, the Committee was tasked with building on last year's increase in participation, create excitement, remove barriers and simplify wherever possible.

With that in mind after discussion and meeting the Committee is proud to put forth the following tournaments and rules for the 2023 season.

YEARLONG INDIVIDUAL SPECIES CHANGES

- Remove cod (due to slot size regulations)
- Remove albacore (not enough being caught/entered)
- Make new trial species from last year (sea robin and triggerfish) permanent
- Added trial of two species for Kayak division (sea bass & bluefish)
- Make Legal size limit to retain each species of fish the minimal size needed to enter a fish (i.e. eliminate a second higher size requirement imposed by the club. —if it's big enough to win its big enough to win.
- Continue with the new direct entry system on the web site launched in 2022.

CHANGES TO ANGLER OF THE YEAR

Begin new point system for every category. Wining 1st earns three points, placing 2nd earns two points and placing 3rd gains one point for each species per shore and boat division.

The angler who accumulates the most points at the end of the season is the Angler of the Year.

TEAM TOURNAMENTS

RISAA will hold (two) 10 day tournaments for two person teams.

Team Fluke: Beginning Friday, June 30th and ending 5 pm Sunday, July 9th.

(Total weight top four fish over the 10 days, plus top doormat prize)

Team Sea Bass: Beginning Saturday, September 30th ending Monday, October 9th

(Two RISAA anglers, total weight top four fish over the 10 days plus top knot head prize.)

Prizes to top 10 teams will be in the form of checks written out to the RISAA bait/tackle shop of their choice from RISAA with the payouts as follows: per team member - \$150 1st, \$125 2nd, \$100, 3rd, \$75 4th, \$50 5th, \$25 6th, \$20 7th, \$15 8th, \$10 9th & 10th. \$100 to team with largest sea bass.

Each team tournament has been scheduled to include two weekends and a holiday to allow maximum participation for all RISAA members. Signups will be via web site as trialed last year. Rules for the team tournament remain unchanged from last year with fish to be weighed in daily and all fish to be weighed prior to end of the tournament.

Questions? Contact Greg Vespe at
vespe@risaa.org • 401-826-2121

MAGAZINE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



RISAA is looking for volunteers to help develop their magazine which publishes nine times a year. Writers, proof readers, advertising coordinators and associate editors are needed. Put in as much or as little time as you want. Will work with a motivated team of volunteers, staff and consultants that enhanced content and developed a new format last year that has made the magazine more popular than ever.

Contact Greg Vespe, RISAA Executive Director
and Magazine Editor at vespe@risaa.org
or call Greg at 401.826.2121



BITE SHORTENED HOOKS FOR CATCH & RELEASE

By: Fred DeFinis

Few topics generate as much discussion as whether or not to release the fish we catch and each angler has her/his own views. Certainly, there are times when we don't want to release a fish such as when fishing for the table, introducing a new angler—especially a younger one—to the sport or fishing in a tournament. In those cases, we try as much as possible to be sure to land the fish.

There are other times when catch-and-release is preferable, such as: fishing for school stripers in the spring migration, fishing for blues when you already have your limit of three, fishing for black sea bass when there are a lot of undersized fish, and fishing on a day when you already have plenty of fish in the fridge. RISAA members probably can name a few more.

When fishing catch-and-release, we want to release the fish as quickly as possible with as little harm as possible. That means not removing the fish from the water or keeping it out of the water too long and trying not to tear the area around its mouth. With some toothy critters such as bluefish, we also need to look out for our own safety.

A Potential Solution for Easy Catch and Release

Dr. Holden Harris of the University of Florida recently conducted a study on catch-and-release using hooks in which the “bite” or length of the hook from the pointed tip to the bottom of the bend was shortened and the barb removed to facilitate release. The photo below shows what he did:

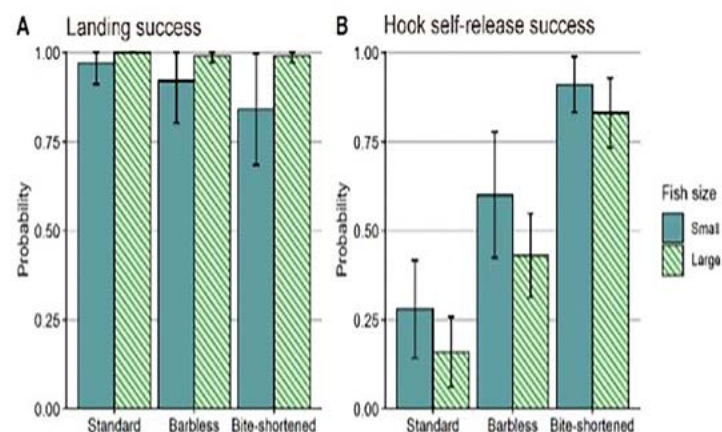


He then had two relatively experienced anglers catch and release 225 fish, 75 with each type of hook. The species targeted was Spotted Sea Trout, similar to our Weakfish (Squeteague). A fish was considered “caught” if it was brought to within three feet of the boat. A fish was considered “released” if it got off the hook within ten seconds while the angler gave slack in the line. The anglers rotated hook types to randomize the results. Note that neither angler had prior experience with the bite-shortened hook type.

Surprising Results

What is most interesting about his results is that on larger fish—over thirteen inches—the landing success rate was nearly one hundred percent across all three hook styles. Thus, the barbless, bite-shortened hook did not affect landing success. For smaller fish under thirteen inches, landing success for the bite-shortened hook dropped to eighty-five percent, still not shabby, especially considering those fish would be released anyway.

The bite-shortened hook showed its advantage on the release statistics. Using these hooks allowed the larger fish to be released at an 83% rate and the smaller fish released at an 89% rate, all without touching the fish or removing them from the water. By contrast, only 15% of the larger fish caught on standard hooks could be released without handling. See table below:



What Does It Mean For Us?

While we fish for different species in New England, there is strong evidence that a relatively experienced angler doesn't need a standard or barbed hook to land fish. A quick release with no handling is better for the fish and allows us to get back into the action quicker too.

More study is needed but if we could demonstrate that we are releasing fish with less damage or trauma that leads to mortality, limits could theoretically be increased. Most recreational anglers don't know that release mortality contributes greatly to the calculations in how many fish are harvested. In the case of recreational striped bass harvest, the calculation of dead discards is greater than the amount we take home. Perhaps there is an opportunity for a “Citizen Science” experiment here? In any case, I know that next May I will be trying this technique when the schoolies arrive in RI and I'll let readers know the results. Maybe you want to try it too?

Possible Discharge Of Nuclear Wastewater Into Cape Cod Bay

By: Captain Dave Monti

About 130 anglers, government officials, community members and fishing leaders attended the Cape Cod Salties Sports Fishing Club's forum on January 11 at the Yarmouth Senior Center. The forum focused on the possible discharge of nuclear wastewater into Cape Cod Bay. The Cape Cod Salties (CCS) Sports Fishing Club has been an active RISAA affiliated club for many years.

“Holtec International, the current operator of the Plymouth Nuclear Plant (and overseer of its decommissioning) has openly and publicly discussed the potential release of radioactively contaminated wastewater into Cape Cod Bay.” said P. Johnathan Ungerland II, president of the Cape Cod Salties. “We now have an enhanced understanding of the Holtec business model, how it handles plant decommissioning, how those profit-first practices have impacted other communities, and how immediately they now threaten industry, ecosystem, and enjoyment of vast natural resources along the cherished waters of coastal New England. We have a precious Bay and Ocean resource here on Cape Cod and we as an organization aim to protect it today and for future generations. Nu-



Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant in Plymouth, MA is being decommissioned by Holtec International. The angling community, led by the Cape Cod Salties, a RISAA affiliate, aims to prevent nuclear wastewater from being discharged into Cape Cod Bay.



130 anglers, community members and leaders attended the January 11 Cape Cod Salties' public forum at Yarmouth Senior Center on preventing a possible nuclear wastewater discharge into Cape Cod Bay.

clear wastewater should not be released into Cape Cod Bay. Not one drop!”

A video of the meeting with guest speaker Diane Turco of Cape Downwinders, will be available on the Cod Salties YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKOAR9ygX_RMMw5npYdxsbg. For additional issue information visit <https://www.capedownwinders.info/about-4-1>.

“One way anglers, fishing and community organizations can help is to participate in our sign on letter opposing the discharge of nuclear wastewater into Cape Cod Bay. To join our effort contact me at pjungerland@gmail.com.” said Jonathan Ungerland.

Please join the Cape Cod Salties and their effort to prevent nuclear wastewater from being released into Cape Cod Bay.

UPCOMING SEMINAR

LIVE! Back at the **ELKS LODGE**
60 Clyde Street, West Warwick, RI



JANUARY 30 @ 7PM

FIND THE PERFECT MATCH

MAKING SENSE OF FISHING RODS



This seminar will help RISAA members “crack the code” when it comes to understanding and choosing a fishing rod that has the performance characteristics best suited for each anglers skill level and fishing style. Terms like forgiveness, parabolic action, varying speed classifications, ratings and composite characteristics will be deciphered at this seminar.

SPECIAL NOTICE!

This is an in person seminar at the West Warwick Elks Lodge, 60 Clyde Street, West Warwick, RI. We plan to have food available at 5:30 p.m. as in the past and plan to tape the seminar for members who were not able to attend.

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YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!



2023 VOLUNTEER Sign-Up Sheet

Please complete this form to volunteer.

Thank you in advance for agreeing to volunteer at the Show. Your good work is appreciated and will help make our Fishing Show and RISAA a big success. And, volunteers get to attend the show **FREE**. Every single shift is important. We can use help at each.

Please indicate the shifts you are willing to volunteer for:

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Friday, March 11

- Shift 1: 12pm - 4pm
- Shift 2: 4pm - 8pm/close

Saturday, March 12

- Shift 1: 8:30am - 12:30pm
- Shift 2: 12:15pm - 4:30pm
- Shift 3: 4:15pm - 9pm/close

Sunday, March 13

- Shift 1: 10am - 1pm
- Shift 2: 1pm - 5pm/close

THANK YOU!

PLEASE SEND THE COMPLETED FORM TO: RISAA, PO Box 299, Tiverton RI 02878, you can email Greg Vespe, Executive Director, at vespe.risaa@gmail.com or call the RISAA office at 401.826.2121. THANK YOU.

UPCOMING SEMINAR

LIVE! Back at the **ELKS LODGE**
60 Clyde Street, West Warwick, RI



FEBRUARY 27 @ 7PM GETTING THE MOST OUT OF A SMALL BOAT

With Greg Vespe

RISAA Executive Director will speak on his lifelong experiences fishing with small boats; the good the bad and the ugly. From plastics to aluminum to Fiberglass crafts all under 20' learn where small boats shine, where they don't. Greg will cover which ones are better than you would think what modifications he feels are essential, what safety measures he feels are necessities and how maximize your ability to catch fish in them both in shore and offshore.

SPECIAL NOTICE!

This is an in person seminar at the West Warwick Elks Lodge, 60 Clyde Street, West Warwick, RI. We plan to have food available at 5:30 p.m. as in the past and plan to tape the seminar for members who were not able to attend.

FISHING SHOW GEARING UP!

By: Captain Dave Monti

The New England Saltwater Fishing Show will be held March 10-12 at the Rhode Island Convention Center. The show is the largest saltwater fishing show of its type in the Northeast, featuring tackle, rods, reels, lures, electronics, charter guides, boats, motors, accessories, clothes and much more.

"At press time we are about two months out and have over 75 percent of the booths sold, about 275 of them. Our large spaces for boats and large displays against the back wall of the exhibition hall were taken so we expanded things a bit. Boat manufactures such as Everglades (shown by Oyster Harbor Marine) and a host of others will be on display at the Show." said Greg Vespe, Executive director of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (Show sponsors). "We still have booths available. Many of our exhibitors are offering exclusive Show Specials so anglers should take advance of these specials."

"We are keying in on 'How to' seminars focusing on strategies and tactics to target species we as anglers love to catch, eat or release--striped bass, summer flounder, tautog and a host of others. We have a special focus on species that are in abundance in our area due to warming water. Seminars and gear on how to target black sea bass and new abundant species like mackerel, false albacore, and bluefin tuna that are closer to shore." said Vespe.

Last year on Sunday, September 11, about 30 giant bluefin tuna were caught just a couple of miles off Narragansett and Newport, some by anglers that never caught them before. School tuna are here in abundance too, so we have enhanced seminars on fish not commonly caught here in these numbers before, related Vespe.

Seminar topics will include everything from offshore Canyon tactics to inshore tips and tricks for black sea bass. Speakers will

cover locations from Boston Harbor to the Connecticut River and everywhere in between. Accomplished charter captains, authors and local sharpies are all pitching in to cover topics of interest.

Visit www.nesaltwatershow.com or RISAA's Facebook page for updates on seminar topics and speakers as the schedule gets fleshed out. By taking a little time to plan your show visit you can make sure you are at the show for the presentations you want to see and visit the booths that have products you want to check out and buy.

The New England Saltwater Fishing Show is being held at the Rhode Island Convention Center Friday, March 10, 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Saturday, March 11, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; and Sunday, March 12, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Children 11 and under admitted free and on Sunday, March 12, Family Day, all women are admitted free. Visit the Kids Casting Area on Saturday and Sunday for casting and other games.

All adults who enter the show can register to win a Free Fishing Charter Trip with Archangel Fishing Charters with Capt. Mike Littlefield. Tickets in advance at www.ticketmaster.com or at the door for \$12. Friday is Military Appreciation Day. In conjunction with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the first 200 Veterans and Active Duty personnel that arrive on Friday will be admitted free.

Parking is available at the Convention Center Parking Garage with less expensive parking at Providence Place Mall with a longer walk. 🐟

The New England Saltwater Fishing Show, March 10-12 at the Rhode Island Convention Center, will feature 300 booths and free seminars.



RISAA'S MAGAZINE CAN BOOST YOUR SALES!

*Thank you for
supporting the
RISAA Magazine.*



As you likely know we changed the RISAA magazine format with a new look, feel and voice this year after garnering member and advertiser input during the first quarter of 2022. The input also allowed us to develop a new look and feel to our website at www.risaa.org.

When you advertise in our magazine you support not only the monthly publication but also all the other programs that RISAA sponsors.

According to NOAA Fisheries, in Rhode Island recreational fishing contributes over \$419-million in sales impact to the economy annually, \$931-million in Massachusetts and \$606-million in Connecticut. Our primary market, this tristate area, offers advertisers great impact. You can get your share by advertising in our magazine.

THE MAGAZINE IS:

- Directly delivered monthly to over 1,600 RISAA members and posted on our website
- Available to 7,500 affiliated members
- Delivered to legislators, regulators and other policy and opinion leaders

RISAA members and affiliated members are dedicated and involved, and they need what you are offering. In the survey we conducted this year we found that:

- 76% of RISAA members fish at least once a week
- About one third of members own their own boat
- 87% of RISAA members fish from a boat, 48% fish from shore and 17% fish from a kayak and many fish all three modes

In addition to a new graphic look we refocused the editorial content of the magazine. Change highlights included:

- A more enriching/informative publication with less repetitive content—**YOUR AD WILL BE SEEN REGARDLESS OF PLACEMENT**
- We listened to our members via survey and will be including more of the content they want—gear, how-to and newer developments in recreational angling.
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Let us know if you will be advertising with us in 2023, what size ad and for which months. Also please provide the ad or content if you want us to design it. We are publishing a total of nine issues a year as follows: January/February, Special New England Saltwater Fishing Show March Issue, April/May, June, July, August, September, October and a November/December issue.

Thanks for the consideration!

Sincerely,
Greg Vespe
RISAA Executive Director

To find out how you can build your sales by advertising in the RISAA Magazine, for a 2023 rate card visit our website or and contact me at vespe.risaa@gmail.com.

FUN, CAMARADERIE & SOLITUDE

Ice fishing offers a special opportunity each winter in New England.

By: Greg Vespe

Tired of sharpening hooks and not yet ready to spend time untangling your fishing gear from the past season? Looking for a special bonding opportunity with kids and grandkids over winter break that doesn't include long plane flights and lost luggage or hurtling down a mountain while you try to find an orthopedic surgeon on speed dial?

Maybe it's time to take another look at ice fishing in New England. By mid-January most of the New England states offer safe ice on at least some lakes. While NE ice thicknesses may not resemble the ice of the Midwest where planes and fully tracked vehicles looking like modified tanks routinely traverse the lake, you can at least find ice that is safe for a 4x4 or snowmobile.

I possess neither a 4 x4 nor a snowmobile, so I tend to favor smaller lakes that I can access by foot and trek to my spot of choice with my gear in a backpack and sled. Not that I will turn down an offer of being towed out to my spot, which happens more often than you would think as folks on the ice tend to be a special kind of cheery and good natured lot. In many ways it's quite an enjoyable change from what can be the notoriously grumpy saltwater scene. The other thing of note is that once set up (either tip ups and/or jigging holes) folks tend to have a bit of extra time, and before long most lakes will end up with a social hub somewhere out on the ice where one can still keep an eye on their flags yet converse a bit and share some grilled masterpieces. I have been out on lakes where there were dueling smokers, full barbeque grills and chowder delivery services amongst friends

that only required a wave and toss of a hat to get delivery!

Three inches of actual solid ice is usually considered the standard minimum level of safe ice to stand and fish on, but keep in mind that's solid ice not snow pack which tends to be considerably weaker and can be a bit deceiving when you first drill holes. In RI if you find 4" of good black ice that's worth celebrating. I'm still a bit antsy on thin ice so I tend to drive approximately five hours to find ice that is routinely in 10" think range and at times considerably thicker. This for me is a bit less stressful and allows me to be more comfortable with both novices and grandkids along as guests. \

Most states allow for five tip ups per person with a license, but there are exceptions where some lakes reduce that number further. Most often I tend to set four tip ups and then will drill a few extra holes and bounce around with a jigging rod as my fifth rod and try to find some fish willing to hit a lure, which to me is really a joy, especially when the fish finder lets you watch the fish come up and actually strike your rig. Adding electronics to ice fishing can help both find fish and fishing spots with the use of both sonar and GPS/contour functions.

Despite the general social nature of ice fishing there are moments particularly in the pre-dawn phase as you troop out onto the lake when the stars are still out that you can really feel the beauty and solitude of the morning. Absolute silence is disturbed only by the creak of the ice, the crunching of snow under your feet and the hiss of your sled being dragged behind you. Sunrise on a lake with the mist drifting up off the ice can be mystical. Once you

have arrived most anglers now use some form of motorized auger either battery, 2 stroke or propane (my choice) but there are still purists who use a manual auger and in RI a "chip stick" can be very effective when the ice is less than 6" thick.

Fishing is fishing, so even if you have minimal freshwater or ice fishing experience it doesn't take long to get the hang of choosing spots to set tip ups. Choose spots just like you would choose to fish in saltwater. Drop offs, flats, edges, channels and choke points are all contenders. Early morning trips to bait shops can be a special event especially for kids of all ages and some will hold more species and sizes of minnows than you even knew existed. I do the classic mixed bag and often get a few different sizes in hopes of guessing right. Make sure you have an aerator for your bucket and the bucket needs to be insulated unless the temps are expected to be above or not too far below freezing. It's a bit of a surprise to check your minnows and find you now own a solid block of ice complete with frozen minnows inside it.

Clothing has gotten so good now that with a bit of proper prep no one has to be cold while ice fishing. I will suggest you bring a



RISAA Member Kraig Ruth with a largemouth bass.

few pairs of gloves along as "warm and waterproof" still seems to be something that most manufactures struggle with. Being careful not to step in a freshly drilled hole tends to be the best way to keep your feet from getting wet. Seems simple but when you are setting up holes it can be a bit harder than you would think to stay out of them. As for the fishing itself when the flag pops up and you see the spool spinning it's amazing how exciting that can be... especially if you get a "runner" and the spool is literally rattling as the line dumps off of it.

Given the limited daylight up north in the winter you can fish till dark and still be back and toasty in your cabin or headed back home by 6:00 p.m. So long days on the ice are still considerably shorter than a day out on the ocean. This winter maybe that sound you hear is the ice calling! ❄️

Note the author's favorite lake/lodge among the many in driving distance is Lake Cobbosseecontee and Lakeside Lodge in Winthrop, Maine for accommodations.



Captain TJ Harris with a good size brown trout.

“Dream, Shop And Eat Your Way Through The 2023 Saltwater Fishing Show”

By: Todd Corayer

For 19 years the New England Saltwater Fishing Show has attracted national and local companies determined to outfit us with everything needed to get on the water and on the fish. Show veterans have favorite booths and friends to find after a long absence but there's real joy in winding our way through the aisles to discover new businesses, small and global, who will have just what we need and want. The Show highlights boats, gear, tackle, technology and thankfully, some amazing food. For 2023, here are a few favorites to visit.

Everglades Boats at Oyster Harbors Marine

Booth 1332-1335

It's okay to start the Show by dreaming big. Deadhead straight from the front doors to Oyster Harbors Marine's display of Everglades Boats. Everglades are designed to accommodate families and friends as well as hard core anglers who need to get on the grounds quickly and comfortably. It's a new age and we don't need to lash ourselves to the foremast when seas get big or get soaked from lack of cover. We can sit in thick chairs behind glass center consoles as a suite of navigation aids guide us to fast canyon turnarounds or back home to the Bay. They offer seaworthy luxury without forgetting you live to fish. Life is short, so have a conversation with them at booths 1332-1335.

Albie Snax by Fish Snax Lure

Booth 1109

While we might use the interweb to buy things, nothing is finer than meeting and speaking with the people who actually build and sell the gear we love. One serious local fan favorite are Albie Snax from Fish Snax Lures. Few plastics are as reliable and well-constructed as the Snax. From first migration stripers to those big girls we thankfully release to August albies, Snax lures are well proven. With a strong fall into winter bite, I continue to catch holdover bass on white/pearl and pink Albie Snax rigged with jig heads with a slow retrieve. They offer sand eel patterns which have unreal action and a series of hooks to properly rig the whole deal. Leave some room in your shopping bag for a fill up at booth 1109.



Dark Matter Casting Rods, the company makes a variety fishing rods of all types, in patterns and colors new to the market.

WolfPack Tackle

Booth 1023

New to the Show, WolfPack Tackle will offer you a slew of new products for shallow and deep waters, all shining from their mix of technology, common sense, angler participation and precise attention to those details which fool fish. Their power swivel on Ahi Casting Lures looks ingenious, as do most of their creations. WolfPack will have bunker spoons, Outrodders, Casting heads, Ahi heads, Dredge heads for towing ballyhoo or their own Ahi tails and Jet heads available to help you catch inshore and offshore game fish. Wolfpack and all their innovative designs are at booth 1023.



WolfPack has a full line of lures including this Ahi-casting lure.

Dark Matter Rods and Lures

Booths 1024 and 1025

There's always an excuse for a new rod and Dark Matter has a line of Psychedelic casting rods which definitely are a new face on the market. As a veteran of a hundred or so Grateful Dead and Jerry Garcia shows, I will attest that these 7' medium heavy, fast action rods with Fuji guides are pretty super groovy, extra trippy and flat out far out. Dark Matter will showcase their through wire plugs like the Astro Spook. Big search baits will call in anything with an appetite and you have to see the Thiccckle Rick pattern. There will be plenty of new options for a new year at booths 1024 and 1025.

Stone Silo Foods

Booths 112 and 113

Who doesn't get hungry carrying those bags full of plugs and handfuls of squishy plastics from the Worm Bar? Crab cakes are a show favorite each year so follow your nose to Stone Silo Foods. Try some sizzling lump blue crab cakes or one of their famous Stone Silo crab cakes made with Blue claw, Jonah, Snow and Rock crab. They specialize in a variety of seafoods and their stuffed clams might give your favorite secret recipe a serious challenge. Stone Silo will be set up and cooking at booths 112 and 113.

Life Raft Survival Equipment

Booths 310 and 311

After all the rods, lures and snacks are stowed, we know safety is paramount for good days. Life Raft Survival Equipment will showcase important gear for any sized vessel, including rafts for small recreational boats and offshore commercial draggers, Mustang and Spinlock life vests, satellite communications, even pump activated water makers. If "Just in case" is your motto, LRSE, at booths 310 and 311, provides safety products to give you ease while you lean back into that Everglades captain chair to enjoy a warm Stone Silo lobster cake. 🦞

Editor's Note: We thank Todd Corayer for all the great RISAA magazine writing. Once again this year he has highlighted a few show exhibitors above that are representative of the hundreds of manufactures and retailers displaying at the show. Todd Corayer is a lifelong fisherman and occasional hunter who writes about other people's outdoors adventures. You can read more New England fishing reports and stories at www.fishwrapwriter.com.

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If you would like more information or would like to join a committee contact:
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2023 College Scholarships Programs

We encourage the participants of every member by helping us to raise awareness of our scholarship program. Please let your family and friends know about this program and tell them to spread the word.

Scholarships Committee
David Michel, CHAIRMAN



Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association Member Scholarships

- Any RISAA member in good standing or their immediate family, specifically their children or stepchildren, grandchildren, brother or sister, or stepbrother or stepsister, who is currently a high school senior and will attend ANY college or university within one year, may apply for the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association Member Scholarship.
- The student does NOT have to pursue a marine science degree. Any degree program at any college is acceptable.
- \$600 scholarships are awarded.
- Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis.

Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers FOUNDATION AWARDS

Fisheries & Marine Sciences Scholarships

Awarded to any Rhode Island high school senior who will be attending either the University of Rhode Island or Roger Williams University, in a Fisheries or Marine Sciences program within one year.

Three \$500 Scholarships are awarded, and the recipient does not have to be connected with RISAA in any way.

Fisheries & Marine Sciences Continuing Education Scholarship

Awarded to any student currently enrolled at either the University of Rhode Island or Roger Williams University, and entering his/her second year in a marine science program.

\$500 Scholarships are awarded to the one student at each university.

Stephen J. Therrien Memorial Scholarship

The Stephen J. Therrien Memorial Scholarship is RISAA's most prestigious merit-based award and recognizes students who show outstanding achievement and commitment. Therrien Scholarships are intellectually curious and have demonstrated passion, experiences, or achievements beyond the usual. They are, in other words, not just top students, but extraordinary people. All qualified candidates who apply for either the Rhode Island Saltwater Angler's Foundation's "Fisheries or Marine Sciences Scholarship" or the "Marine Sciences Continuing Education Scholarship" will be considered for this award. These are \$500 Scholarships.

URI Graduate School of Oceanography Research Vessel Endeavor.



How To Apply

if you have a child who is a high school senior, or know someone who is eligible to apply, let them know about our scholarship programs. Applications and information is available:

- Email to michel@risaa.org
- Go to www.risaa.org and click on the "Scholarships" button
- Call the RISAA office at 401-826-2121
- **Applications must be post marked or received by May 5, 2023**

AnglerCatch A Success For Fish Managers & Anglers

By: Captain Dave Monti

AnglerCatch, the RISAA supported smartphone software application for recreational fishermen, was a big success last year. The app launched as part of a pilot project with RISAA, the RI Department of Environmental Management and Harbor Light Software, developers of the software application.

The aim of the two year pilot project was to develop a recreational fishing smartphone app that anglers could use to provide fish managers with needed supplemental catch and effort data to compliment NOAA Fisheries data used to develop recreational fishing harvest limits and ultimately regulations. The app serves conservation because it provides fish managers with badly needed information on fish stocks. AnglerCatch is a great fishing log and resource for anglers providing tides, regulations, weather buoy information and more.

Fran Karp, chief executive officer of Harbor Light Software, said, "The goal of the two year project was to serve as a pilot project, constantly receiving angler input and fine tuning AnglerCatch so it works better for anglers." The app was tested by RISAA members and non-member anglers with the aim of improving the app with input. The app was used by anglers last season with the aim of expanding it in years three and four as additional funding becomes available coastwide.

Conor McManus, Chief of Marine Fisheries for RI DEM, said, "The goal of this pilot program is to provide an additional source of data that can be used to complement MRIP data. We are particularly interested in better characterizing recreational discard data on a number of recreationally-significant species. The aim is to have complementary data to help guide management decisions pertaining to State fishing seasons and regulations."

Greg Vespe, RISAA Executive Director, said, "AnglerCatch is providing more accurate data to fish managers while providing a logbook that can help enhance an angler's fishing efforts. The data anglers collect supplements the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) used to estimate recreational fishing catch and

effort. So every time the app is used anglers are making a contribution to conservation."

Vespe said, "The angler log book feature of AnglerCatch enhances fishing by providing information on past fishing trips to help develop fishing strategies and tactics to catch more or larger fish on future trips."

Reports on species caught in any given month, tide and wind

A fisherman's logbook—with a purpose

AnglerCatch



Use your data for better fishing.

- Historical trip and catch locations.
- Weather
- Tides
- Buoys
- Solunar
- Currents
- Forecasts



AnglerCatch puts the power of your data in your hands, helping to give you a better fishing experience.

Create your historical fishing data by capturing your efforts with photos and information important to you.

Your data helps paint a clearer picture of recreational fishing in New England and will supplement current angler data collection programs such as MRIP, the Marine Recreational Information Program.



Available FREE on Android and iOS



www.harborlightsoftware.com

AnglerCatch ads on fishing publication digital platforms were most successful to generate downloads with in person meetings working best to get anglers to use and report fishing trips via the app.



Chris Cimino (far left) of Harbor Light Software at the AnglerCatch information table helping anglers send in their catches using the free AnglerCatch fishing app for smartphones.

when the bite was on (and off), and the types of baits and lures that seem to work best are only some of the helpful information points that can be logged. You can put a lot of effort into entering log information, or none at all and just report your catch and effort to help fish managers manage better.

Testing marketing strategies and tactics were also a big part of the pilot project. Marketing strategies deployed included brand development, development of an app website and social media channels, a digital media campaign, an ongoing PR effort targeting anglers, and target paid media in electronic and printed vehicles published by On-The-Water and Fisherman's magazines. In person events such as RISAA seminars, fishing shows, tournaments and guest speaking at fishing clubs were also part of the program.

The most effective strategies generating downloads were marketing activities such as email blasts, and digital ads in fishing publications and websites. And, the most effective activities for acquiring users were in person events such as trade shows, seminars, tournaments and meetings.

At the conclusion of the 2022 fishing season (July to November) there were 1,247 downloads and 546 active users. The number of trips reported needs to be bolstered and will be a focus moving forward.

Fran Karp said, "We are happy to report that the pilot project has received additional funding for the next two years with the aim of expanding angler use and to hone in on those app features that anglers want that will enhance use even further."

Download the AnglerCatch app for free at your favorite app store. The company that designed the software, Harbor Light Software, has an outstanding help line if you should run into any difficulties. For information visit www.anglercatchapp.com.



The RISAA Angler Hall of Fame lists the largest tournament entry of each approved species. Any angler who enters a catch that surpasses an Angler Hall of Fame record shall, upon verification of the catch, become the new record holder for that species. In addition, the angler shall receive 5 points toward **Angler of the Year**.

BOAT DIVISION

Species	Angler	Weight	Year
Black Sea Bass	Raymond Morrocco	7.20lbs.	2012
Bluefish	Robert Matteson	20.46	2017
Bonito	Micheal Neto	12.20	2004
Cod	Robert Morel	49.10	2001
False Albacore	Charles Bradbury	16.20	2004
Fluke	Kyle Blount	15.65	2006
Haddock	Nicholas Blount	7.85	2004
Mahi Mahi	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	37.80	2001
Pollock	Harry Templeton	27.70	2001
Scup	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	3.74	2014
Shad	Kyle Paparelli	3.80	2009
Squeteague	Robert Roy	10.50	2006
Striped Bass	Peter Vican	77.40	2011
Tautog	Joseph Blecziński	18.90	2015
Tuna - Albacore	Harley Benton	55.00	1999
Tuna - Bluefin	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	193.88	2009
Tuna - Yellowfin	Randy Pereschino	112.00	2001
Winter Flounder	Michael Lanni	4.40	1998

SHORE DIVISION

Species	Angler	Weight	Year
Black Sea Bass	Joseph Pearson	3.85	2009
Bluefish	Gilbert Bell	16.90	2016
Bonito	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	9.99	2007
False Albacore	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	12.22	2007
Fluke	Michael Tilelli	6.60	2018
Scup	Charles Underhill	2.69	2012
Shad	Jonathan Pickering	1.75	2008
Squeteague	Robert Moeller	16.54	2007
Striped Bass	Richard Reich	51.66	2013
Tautog	Richard Gallipeau	11.20	2009
Winter Flounder	Dick Geldard	4.40	2009

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A non-profit, IRS recognized (501c3) charitable and community service foundation.
Contributions to the RISA Foundation are deductible on your federal income tax.



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The Rhode Island's Saltwater Anglers Association's

Political Action Committee

One of the missions of RISAA is to represent the concerns of the recreational community on regulatory and legislative issues. That means that we have to deal with elected officials.

Fortunately, there area number of legislatures who have worked hard on our behalf and others who support RISAA's principles. We need to be sure those officials remain in office.

It is also important that legislatures understand who we are. If we don't advance our own causes, no one will do it for us.

By law, our Association can not contribute funds to any candidate, therefor we have established a **legal, incorporated and registered Political Action Committee** which CAN make contributions on our behalf. It has an independent treasurer and its own bank account.

Only donations specifically made to the RISAA PAC can be used. Under no circumstances can any membership dues money - or any other contributions made to the Association - be used for the PAC. It would be a violation of state election laws for any money from RISAA to be used for PAC purposes.

Also, all money received by the PAC must come from *individual donors*. *No contribution can be accepted from any organization or business interest.*

DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT!

To be effective, we must participate in the system.

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COPPER (UP TO \$49)

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Political Action Committee

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MAIL TO:

RISAA PAC
P.O. Box 299
Tiverton, RI 02878



AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

The Rhode Island Saltwater Angler's Association (RISAA) believes in the sensible management of fisheries and the conservation and restoration of all marine resources. RISAA has accepted a leadership role in order to provide a unified voice to preserve and protect the rights, traditions and future of recreational angling. In order to achieve these goals, it is important for organizations who have the same goals to join together, uniting their voices and votes for the good of present and future generations of anglers. Therefore, RISAA is proud to be **AFFILIATED** with these respected organizations:



COALITION PARTNERS

In order to promote fisheries management and conservation on a regional, national and international scale, the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association has associated with these organizations:



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP



The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association is a nonprofit Association established to provide a forum for saltwater anglers; to provide education to members concerning fishing techniques and overall enjoyment of fishing; to foster sportsmanship; to support marine conservation and the sound management of fisheries resources; and provide a unified voice to preserve and protect the rights, traditions and the future of recreational fishing.

Complete the form below and mail to: RISAA, P.O. Box 299, Tiverton, RI 02875
or REGISTER ONLINE at www.risaa.org/register to

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Date Of Birth _____ Phone # (_____) _____ E-mail _____
 Put me on RISAA E-mail list: YES NO Thank You
Occupation _____ Employed At _____
Children (up to 17 yrs): _____
 Register them as Junior Members (FREE). YES (Complete Below) NO Thank You

INFORMATION

Prefer to Fish From (check all that apply):
 Rocks & Piers Charter Boats Party Boats Fly Fishing Surfcasting Other _____
 Own Boat: Length: _____ ft Maker/Type: _____ Boat Name: _____ Docked at: _____
How did you hear about RISAA?
 Friend Tackle Shop Facebook News Article RISAA Newsletter Fishing Show Web Site
 Saw Advertisement at: Internet Magazine Newspaper TV

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

Regular Adult: \$50/year
 Multiple Years (save \$5/year): \$90 (2 yrs) \$135 (3 yrs) \$180 (4 yrs)
 Senior (Age 65+): \$25/year. Requires date of birth: _____
 Life Member: \$500 (one time, single payment)
 Student (College/Trade School): \$25/year (max .6 yrs). Requires copy of current student ID card
 Junior Member: FREE (Up to 17 years. Requires parent membership or a RISAA sponsor)
Junior's Name: _____ Age _____ Date of Birth _____
Junior's Name: _____ Age _____ Date of Birth _____
RISAA Sponsor (if parent not a member): _____ Relationship _____

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY APPLICATION

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ (Payable to: RISAA)
To pay by credit card, visit: www.risaa.org/regist

MAIL TO:
RISAA
P.O. Box 299
Tiverton, RI 02878

Meetings: Held on the last Monday of each month at the West Warwick Elks in West Warwick, RI at 7:00 pm. (attendance not required)
Membership Benefits Include: Monthly Seminars • Fishing Tournaments • Fishing Trips • Monthly Newsletter • Discounts at Tackle Shops & Marine Dealers • Social Events • College Scholarships • Adds your voice to fisheries management and conservation issues.



RISAA

P.O. BOX 299
Tiverton, RI 02878

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WE WELCOME YOU TO JOIN US!

RHODE ISLAND
SALTWATER *Anglers*
The VOICE of Southern New England Fishermen

SIGN UP TODAY www.RISAA.org • 401-826-2121