



RHODE ISLAND  
**SALTWATER** *Anglers*

Representing  
**OVER 7,500**  
Recreational Anglers

*IN THIS ISSUE:*

## **Rigging Soft Plastics for Striped Bass**

*PLUS:*

## **Exciting Changes For the 2024 Tournament Season**

RISAA member  
Joe Pechie with a  
nice striper

*PLUS:* **2024 COLLEGE  
SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAMS**

ISSUE: 297 • March 2024

[www.RISAA.org](http://www.RISAA.org) • 401-826-2121

## EVENTS & MEETINGS

**March 8, 9, & 10**

20th Annual New England Saltwater Fishing Show™

**March 25**

Seminar—Expert Tips on How to Catch Big Fluke with Captain Dave Monti

**April 8**

Surfcaster's Meeting @ 6:00 pm at Gregg's of North Kingstown

### Special RISAA Tournaments:

**June 28 – July 7**

Fluke Tournament

**July 19 – 28**

Juniors Tournament  
Prizes awarded to our juniors based on the most species caught

**August 9 - 18**

Bluefish Tournament

**October 11 - 20**

Tautog Tournament

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The Official Newsletter of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association

Published Monthly

RISAA, PO BOX 1467, Coventry, RI 02816

## FROM THE HELM

# It's Show Time!



This simple phrase has been issued by showmen, hawkers, and action heroes since the beginning of show business to gain attention and present something big. Now it's our turn to let everyone know "it's Show Time" for RISAA in 2024!

With an action-packed line up for the year we are starting off the 2024 fishing season with our 20th annual New England Saltwater Fishing Show™. For those who don't know, the origins of the "New England Saltwater Fishing Show" are humble. It all started as a simple used gear swap among friends at a local Elk's Club every spring. In 20 short years (my perceived length of time for a 20 year span has obviously changed over time) we, and those before us, have grown it to where we are today with over 210 exhibitors coming from as far away as Florida, Wisconsin, and Texas. One of our exhibitors recently returned from fieldwork in The Galapagos Islands in time to make the show. In addition to our highly diverse group of exhibitors the show also features entertaining and educational seminars as well as raffles for a charter trip and custom fishing rods. Even celebrities from programs such as "Wicked Tuna" are drawn to the show this year. None of this would be possible without all the support and countless hours of so many of our RISAA members.

Following our amazing saltwater fishing show we will have a little time to get used to our new rods, reels, and tackle before we share our knowledge with the next generation of up and coming saltwater anglers with our youth fishing camp. As we recall last year the camp was cancelled due to forecasts of foul weather. This year we are twice as excited to host this event and introduce another group of great young people to the world of recreational saltwater angling. Again, this program would not be possible without the support and assistance of so many RISAA members as well as the RI Division of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and others.

As we begin to start this season, we also look forward to another year full of charter trip giveaways, discounted member charter trips for squid, fluke, black sea bass, and tautog, and monthly seminars to help us improve our saltwater fishing game and learn some new tactics that we might not have tried before. Our annual tournament also has some new and exciting changes that we will be outlining soon.

Speaking of tournaments, I know of a few friendly rivalries that will surely be reignited this season and taken to the next level. Good luck to everyone!

So if you haven't finished your winter homework and filled your tackle boxes to overflowing with incredible numbers of new and innovative rigs for your favorite saltwater species yet, you had better get to it, because it's show time!

Scott TRAVERS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



RI SALTWATER ANGLERS ASSOCIATION  
Legislative Committee

## THE WATCH

Reported by: Richard Hittinger, CHAIRMAN

# HERRING NEED YOUR HELP

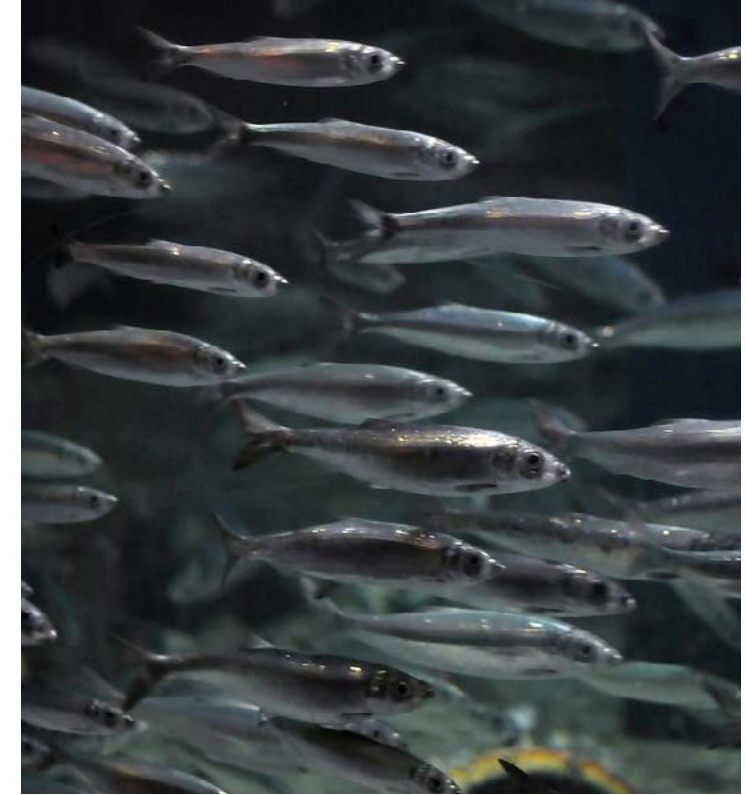
If you care about the future of striped bass, cod, tuna and all other predator fish that we rely on for our saltwater angling activities please read this entire article and consider speaking up during the coming Scoping Meeting process. Yes, herring need our help! They are small baitfish that either spend their lives in the ocean like Atlantic herring or return to the rivers and streams of New England like alewife, blueback herring and shad. But they are a key portion of the diet of cod, striped bass, bluefish, tuna, gulls, whales and many other species. The problem is that because of over fishing we have severely depleted the numbers of all of these species and I believe that our predator fish populations are suffering because of this forage fish mismanagement.

The good news is that the New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC) who are in charge of managing Atlantic herring are in the process of evaluating what should be done to improve the management of Atlantic herring through Amendment 10 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan and in response to pressure from groups including RISAA they are allowing comments during this process on river herring and shad avoidance as well as "gear conflict" avoidance. This is our opportunity to have our concerns heard. There will be a hearing at the Hampton Inn, So. Kingstown, RI on March 19, at Hampton Inn, Buzzards Bay on March 27 and Hilton Hotel, Mystic, CT on April 17, all starting at 6 PM.

### WHY WE SHOULD ACT

Many of you who have been fishing in RI waters for less than 20 years may not remember how great a bait a live herring can be for striped bass, but I will tell you that it certainly deserves its name as "striper candy." It was the best bait for striped bass and many other species bar-none! But because the return of river herring has been so poor for the last 20 years we have not had that resource available to us. The dip netting and possession of river herring is totally closed. The millions of dollars spent to remove dams and install fish ladders does not return the investment that it should. All because the commercial harvest of Atlantic herring is taking river herring as a by-catch before these fish can return to their native spawning grounds. It is a farce to me that you and I are not allowed to net even one river herring, but the Atlantic herring commercial fishermen are legally entitled to catch 800,000 pounds of river herring and shad per year as bycatch! And because Atlantic herring stocks are depleted (at 12% of its biomass target), this bycatch is actually becoming a major portion of their catch.

Much of the Atlantic herring commercial fishing is done with large vessels conducting what is termed "midwater trawling."



57% of the herring landed from 2015 to 2019 were made using this fishing method. Most midwater trawls are made with pair trawlers: where a large net is dragged by two vessels running side-by-side. This is a very indiscriminate method that often catches entire schools of river herring outside of our rivers and bays when they are marshalling in preparation for their return to spawn in their natal spawning grounds. NEFMC passed a previous Amendment 8 that established a 12-mile buffer zone where midwater trawling was not allowed but a law suit filed by the commercial fishing interests was successful in reversing that buffer zone because NEFMC did not prove why it was necessary. I believe that this buffer zone was helping to reduce the bycatch of river herring and it certainly reduced the interaction between midwater trawling and recreational fishing.

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS THAT YOU CAN TAKE

Please consider attending one of the in-person meetings that I listed above and speaking. This is the most impactful way to get our points across. If you can't attend in person, please attend one of the two virtual hearings on April 17 or April 22 and speak. If for

(Continued on page 8)

# MEMBER PHOTOS



RISAA Treasurer Steve Skenyon with nice lake trout.



Member Mike Pahlas with a late season tog at Groton, CT.



Don't be this guy.



## THE WELCOME COMMITTEE

Dawn Filliatreault Wood, CHAIR

### Welcome NEW Members!

- James Babbitt - Hope Valley, RI
- Pete Blanpied - West Kingstown, RI
- Philip Chorman - Waltham, MA
- Robert Francis - Portsmouth, RI
- Paul Harris - Charlestown, RI
- Steven Juchnik - Warwick, RI
- Dave Leandro - Brooklyn, CT
- Brad Luongo - Ipswich, MA
- Jack McMath - Barrington, RI
- Edward Porter Jr. - West Warwick, RI
- Ryan Sansoucy - Woodstock, CT
- Quentin Small - North Dighton, MA
- John Soetbeer - Narragansett, RI
- Mike Traiforos - Marlborough, MA
- Todd Treonze - Newport, RI
- Ernie Young - Bradford, RI

*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.*

### SEND US YOUR PICS!

If you have a memorable outing, send your member photos to the editor [definis@risaa.org](mailto:definis@risaa.org)

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# COOKING YOUR CATCH

By: Paula Smalec

## SHRIMP ORZO

(30 Minute, One-Skillet Meal)

Source: <https://juliasalbum.com/shrimp-orzo/>

As I write this, I am in Myrtle Beach, SC enjoying some of the local seafood. Seeing the boats trawling for shrimp just a few miles offshore, I decided to prepare a recipe featuring these local, wild-caught white shrimp. This recipe is a “keeper”! I highly recommend using “wild-caught” shrimp instead of “farmed” whenever possible. I used size 21/25 shrimp for this recipe. The numbers simply represent the range of shrimp per pound.

### Ingredients:

- 1 pound x-large shrimp (21/25), peeled and deveined
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup orzo, uncooked
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 14 oz. can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- 5 oz. fresh baby spinach
- 1 cup heavy cream

### Directions:

Blend the paprika, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper. Place shrimp into a bowl, sprinkle the mixture over the shrimp, and toss to coat.

Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil on medium high heat in a large



skillet until hot. Add shrimp and minced garlic and cook for about 2 minutes per side. Do not overcrowd the pan or the shrimp will steam and not sear. Cook the shrimp in two batches if necessary. Remove shrimp to a plate and cover loosely with foil.

To the same, now empty, skillet, add the chopped sun-dried tomatoes, the uncooked orzo, and 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Stir frequently, over medium heat for about 2 minutes, until the orzo browns slightly.

Add the chicken stock and bring it to a boil. Reduce the heat so that the stock simmers (medium-low) and cook until the orzo is al-dente, about 7-9 minutes. Stir occasionally to prevent the orzo from sticking to the bottom of the skillet.

Add the spinach, artichokes, and cream. Stir everything on medium-low heat until the spinach wilts.

Add the seared shrimp to the skillet with the cream sauce. Stir everything together and simmer until everything is just warmed through, 1-2 minutes. Taste, and season with additional salt, pepper, and smoked paprika, if desired. 🍴

# 2024 RISAA BANQUET

Everyone I spoke to said they had a great time at the RISAA Banquet on Saturday February 17 at the Quonset O Club. It was a great time to come out with the spouses and have a good meal, celebrate some very good anglers and talk about everything from kids to fishing to what’s new in our world. We started at 5 PM with some Hors d’Oeuvres and drinks plus lots of chatting. Everyone spent time looking at the auction items on several tables in the bar area. The items included fishing tackle of course, but there was also jewelry, a wine package, a tea package and gift certificates. After placing their numbered tickets in bins for their favorite items in the penny social guests wrote bids on the list for a few nice silent auction items, just trying to outbid our friends enough to go home with the prize. All of these activities helped keep the crowd of more than 80 attendees busy while we all claimed a seat at a table with our friends and soon-to-be friends.



Tucker Jansen receives his award.



Junior Angler of the Year Flynn Jansen.

adult entries. Congratulations to the two jacket winners for the 2023 fishing season!

We also gave a special mention to Junior member Jack Harris who accumulated so many points with his first place fluke, sea robin and tautog plus his second and third place winners that he beat out all of the adult entrants. There were many other winners honored and you may view all in the members section of the website.



Angler of the year Michael Tilelli.

Dinner was very good as usual with soup, ziti and bread followed by a delicious chicken plate with stuffing and green beans and capped off with ice cream for dessert. During dinner we had a few door prize drawings and after dinner we all had a chance to honor our special award winner, Dan King for all of the work that he does for recreational fishing by monitoring public access issues in the Westerly, RI area. We also honored our many yearlong tournament winners including the Angler of the Year Michael Tilelli as well as the Junior Angler of the Year, Flynn Jansen. Michael had some impressive catches from shore, including a black sea bass over 2 pounds, a bonito of 6.18 pounds, a false albacore weighing 9.10 pounds and a bluefish almost 11.4 pounds. Michael’s boat catches included the first place pollack and first place haddock. Flynn did very well himself taking the first-place Junior entry from boat for bluefish, mahi mahi and yellowfin tuna plus the second place for black sea bass, sea robin, scup and tautog. Flynn’s bluefish and yellowfin tuna were the heaviest weighed in this year, beating all



Kate Tracy receives her award.

The evening was capped off with a live auction of a few items including a day trolling around Block Island aboard the Outer limits with RISAA Treasurer Capt. Steve Skenyon and a day of bottom fishing aboard the Skipjack with RISAA Board members Bob Murray and Rich Hittinger. After bidding a bit too high, but for a great cause, the lucky winners are now anxiously awaiting their day out on the water with these experienced anglers.

If you were not able to attend the 2024 banquet you missed a great time. Be sure to watch for the date for the 2025 banquet later this year and plan to attend! 🍴

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some reason you can't make any of these meetings then written comments must be received on or before 8 a.m. EST, Tuesday, April 30, 2024. Comments should be addressed to Cate O'Keefe, PhD, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council by mail or email: [comments@nefmc.org](mailto:comments@nefmc.org) More information is available at: <https://www.nefmc.org/library/herring-amendment-10-2>

Please make comments with your own wording but here are some things to consider:

- Say why the Atlantic herring and river herring resources are important to you and why the industrial-scale harvest is a threat to your interests.
- Provide personal examples – state any negative interactions/ conflicts that you have had with the commercial herring fleet such as lost catch or lost opportunity to fish.
- At minimum, the prior buffer zone should be restored so midwater trawlers are moved 12 miles offshore/20 miles east of Cape Cod to protect the forage base and my opportunity to fish.
- Say specifically where you fish – Coxes Ledge, Tuna Ridge, Sharks Ledge, etc.

We need to protect Atlantic herring and river herring and shad for the inshore ecosystem and as prey for the predator fish, mammals, and seabirds that depend on them.

Protecting Atlantic herring, river herring and shad in nearshore waters is critical to protect my opportunity to fish recreationally/ commercially because the species I target depend upon them as forage when they are inshore.

Atlantic herring is now designated overfished and needs to be rebuilt – just like the other species the midwater trawl fleet targets like Atlantic mackerel and river herring and shad. We need to take the pressure off of them in inshore areas and protect spawning grounds.

It is fair and equitable to have the midwater trawlers fish offshore where they can safely operate and still catch their quota and leave

the inshore area for smaller vessels that can only fish inshore.

Midwater trawlers are the biggest fishing vessels on the east coast, up to 165 feet, and they use small-mesh nets the size of football fields, often towed at high speeds between two trawlers, creating a safety risk for smaller, nearby vessels. They can capture millions of Atlantic herring, river herring, groundfish, sport fish, marine mammals, sea birds and other species in a single trip.

Midwater trawlers are known to catch juvenile groundfish species like cod and haddock and we need to keep these vessels out of protected areas and spawning grounds.

There is inadequate observer coverage for this fishery and given their potential for big bycatch events that could wipe out an entire run of river herring or catch thousands of pounds of juvenile groundfish or striped bass, they should not be allowed to fish in nearshore areas that are critical habitat for these and other species.

There are several nearshore areas that are habitat for river herring and shad that co-mingle with Atlantic herring and mackerel. Several of these have been identified as bycatch hotspots. Midwater trawling should be prohibited from these areas because they catch a lot of river herring and shad and a single bycatch event could wipe out a run of river herring.

Small mesh bottom trawls also have a high rate of river herring and shad bycatch and should be prohibited from fishing in the river herring and shad bycatch hotspot areas.

I thank you in advance for making comments on this very important issue that I personally have been following for over a decade and RISAA has supported for at least as long a period of time.

### 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](mailto:hittinger@risaa.org) and we will send you the link (via email) to the next Legislative meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for May 23 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

# 2024 College Scholarships Programs

We encourage the participation 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](mailto:michel@risaa.org)
- Go to [www.risaa.org](http://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 3, 2024**

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# NEW DUES STRUCTURE FOR RISAA MEMBERS

Back in 1997, the same year the movie Titanic was in theaters, Steve Medeiros created the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA). That was 27 years ago. If we look at the price of gasoline in 1997, it was \$1.23 per gallon on average. I bet we all wish prices were like that today!

How surprised would you be to learn that the dues were \$50.00 for a regular membership and \$25.00 for a senior membership back in 1997? That's right, in the history of RISAA the dues have never changed. That's quite remarkable considering that \$1.00 in 1997 is worth \$1.92 today. That means members back then were paying roughly what would be \$96.00 for a regular membership and \$48.00 for a senior membership today.

While I wasn't around during the early years of RISAA, I can speak to how much we do for our members today. The first thing I think of is our website where our members can learn more about our organization and our many committees with members who have so much knowledge and experience in so many various fishing disciplines. On this modern website, you can join RISAA or renew your membership, sign up for one of our head-boat trips or a variety of activities.

*“...we simply cannot continue in a world that has 2024 prices with the income of a 1997 budget.”*

Our monthly seminars, held on the last Monday of each month provide our members a chance to eat, mingle, and enjoy entertaining and informative seminars that focus on various saltwater fishing activities and special events every month. The most recent event was a rig tying event during which members had the opportunity to tie several fishing rigs at different stations under the guidance of an instructor. All the materials were paid for by RISAA. The members kept the rigs they tied and even walked away with instruction sheets telling them what materials they would need and how to make more for the upcoming season. All monthly seminars and events are recorded and available for viewing on the website for members who cannot attend.

We also offer charter trips throughout the fishing season at a discounted price for our members. These are also fantastic opportunities to meet and mingle with other RISAA members, create and build friendships, and maybe catch some fish for dinner at the same time.

Other benefits include the annual membership tournament along with several species-specific tournaments throughout the year that foster camaraderie, the spirit of competition, and afford the winners some bragging rights until the next year. The prizes include checks to the tackle shop of the winners' choices.


Our membership magazine, which is published in 9 issues every year also provides a wealth of information including updates on RISAA tournament standings, updates on important legislative issues pertaining to marine fisheries management, and timely articles on how to improve our angling prowess. This full color magazine also includes advertisements from many of our partners and affiliates who offer discounts to our membership. The magazine goes out to every member and is also available on our website. The cost of printing and mailing the magazine alone costs approximately thirty dollars per member---more than a senior membership.

Programs such as our Kid's Fishing Camp and Take a Kid Fishing help introduce the next generation of saltwater anglers to become proficient, involved, and knowledgeable stewards of the environment. Nor should we ignore the role of the legislative committee working with state, regional, and national agencies to fight for recreational saltwater anglers and sustainable marine fisheries regulations.

All this is supported by a tremendous amount of volunteer effort. However, in order to continue to provide all these services to our members, recreational saltwater anglers, the public, and the environment, we simply cannot continue in a world that has 2024 prices with the income of a 1997 budget. In order to keep providing all these benefits to so many, we have no choice but to increase the dues for our membership.

Beginning on April 1, 2024, we are modestly increasing the membership dues to \$60.00 for a regular membership, and \$35.00 for a senior membership. This new rate will apply to current members upon renewal. The cost of a lifetime membership remains unchanged, at \$500.00. If we all consider the extra \$10.00, an even increase for everyone, for the entire year, that is an increase of less than \$0.03 per day.

This was not an easy decision to make. With all things considered, this was the best choice for everyone, a modest increase in order to continue providing all the services we offer and remain the voice of Southern New England fishermen.

Thank you to all my fellow members for your understanding and your support. 



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*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 a integral part of RI recreational fishing.*

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- Saltwater Edge - Middletown, RI
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## UPCOMING SEMINAR

**LIVE!** Back at the **ELKS LODGE**  
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**MARCH 25 @ 7 PM**

# HOW TO CATCH BIGGER FLUKE with Captain Dave Monti

Capt. Dave Monti's presentation 'How to catch bigger fluke' will feature a take-a-way list of his top tips on how to catch bigger fluke. The seminar includes a series of interviews with charter captains, fishing guides and expert fluke anglers. Strategies and tactics for fishing summer flounder in Bays and the ocean with maps and charts will be covered as well as rigs, jigs, baits and his favorite places to catch fluke. Highlights of the presentation include Capt. Monti's Fluke Cocktail, a rig and bait arrangement proven to catch larger fluke as well as small bait presentations and the importance of flirting with that fluke until it is enticed to strike. You won't want to miss this presentation as it takes the best from the best and puts it into a logical approach on planning and implementing fluke fishing trips.

Monti holds a master captain's license and is a charter fishing captain as well as the fishing writer for the Providence Journal and 12 other newspapers and blogs in the region. He is former 2nd vice president of RISAA, he is active in fish policy issues and past vice chair of the RI Marine Fisheries Council, is an American Saltwater Guides Association board member, vice chair of the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program and a member of the RI Party & Charter Boat Association.



## 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.*

## IMPORTANT UPDATES

Our new mailing address is  
RISAA - PO BOX 1467, Coventry, RI 02816

For Association business such as membership, Fishing Show, and advertising contact Scott Travers at  
Travers@risaa.org or 401-826-2121

To submit photos or content for the monthly magazine  
Fred DeFinis at definis@risaa.org

## RISAA 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 Scott Travers at: Travers@risaa.org  
or call Scott at: (401) 826-2121

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## Frank Cordeiro

### A Special RISAA Volunteer

Frank Cordeiro joined RISAA when the organization was but a few months old. After buying his first boat in 1996, Frank wanted to learn different ways to catch fish in his home waters around Apponaug. As luck would have it, he noticed a RISAA ad in a magazine, and he has been a member ever since.

From the beginning, Frank has been committed to RISAA's youth outreach programs. For years, he and his family volunteered at Take a Kid Fishing Day. While he and his father took kids out on his boat, his mother would cook and bake for the event. Frank now volunteers at the Kids Saltwater Fishing Camp. He enjoys seeing kids who did not even know how to hold a rod when they arrived tying their own knots and catching fish by the final day. In addition to the Kids Saltwater Fishing Camp, Frank volunteers at the New England Saltwater Fishing Show every year, and previously served on RISAA's Board of Directors.

Frank grew up in Coventry, RI fishing Johnson's Pond every weekend with his father and two sisters. He started saltwater fishing when his father bought an eighteen-foot boat in the 1980s. He lived in West Warwick for thirty-eight years, working for Electric Boat until he retired in 2016, with thirty-nine years of service. In 2019, he moved to Charlestown, RI where he now enjoys trolling the tube and worm for stripers and fishing the worm hatch from his twelve-foot Hobie Pro Angler. He purchased the kayak in 2020 after selling his final boat, and the kayak has been an eye opener. He can now slide into skinny water where he could never take his walk-around cuddy cabin.

Even though he is catching fish in new areas, Frank laughs when he admits that the same spots he learned forty years ago



still hold fish. He loves taking his children and grandchildren fishing and while his two sisters do not fish anymore, they still join Frank on the water in their own kayaks to explore Rhode Island's coast.

*This is a series of articles highlighting some of the work done by our RISAA volunteers, often behind the scenes. None of our major events such as the Fishing Show would happen without dedicated volunteers. Likewise, there are dozens of other activities that take place out of public view that all combine to make RISAA the voice of the saltwater angler in Rhode Island and New England. Ed.*

*If you would like to learn more about the many volunteer opportunities at RISAA or you have a skill, talent or interest which can help the association, please contact Scott Travers [travers@risaa.org](mailto:travers@risaa.org)*

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# HOW 2024 FISHING REGULATIONS ARE SHAPING UP

By: Captain Dave Monti

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The regulations below are not final. Captain Monti is reporting the current status of the discussions, not what the final outcome will be. Hopefully, the April issue of the RISAA Magazine will have the final regulations—ed.

At press time the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island were all still seeking public comment and input on 2024 fishing regulations. Check the RISAA magazine in April for regulation updates, however, most states will finalize regulations in April with rules in effect May 1. So, the regulations list for the tri-state area will likely be in the May or June magazine for states that have set regulations by press time.

In Rhode Island, the RI Marine Fisheries Council will meet April 1 to vote on their recommendations to the Director. The Director will take the Council's recommendation plus all public comments received at the February 28 public hearing, and the recommendations of Division scientists and make final rule decisions on all recreational fishing regulations that will be in effect May 1. Connecticut and Massachusetts are on similar tracks.

Here are some fishing regulation highlights for Rhode Island based on the February 5, public workshop held by the RI Division of Marine Fisheries.

**Striped bass.** For 2024 the striped bass regulations will be the same as last year, one fish/person/day at 28" to less than 31" However, there are a number of at sea and shore side filleting requirements i.e. keeping the racks of filleted fish with only two fillets per fish until all anglers are off the vessel or if on shore no filleting permitted while still actively fishing with fishing lines in the water. The fillet requirement is part of a coastwide regulation for striped bass issued by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Striped bass are still overfished according to the 2022 stock assessment. An updated 2024 stock assessment is being done. Many in the recreational community think the news will not be good and we may have even more restrictive regulations in the near future.

**Tautog** regulations for 2024 will likely be the same as they were last year. Tautog are not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring. Tautog have a 16" minimum size. The Spring season opens April 1 to May 31 with a three fish/person/day limit; a closed season June 1 to July 31 during the spawning season; a late summer/early fall season from August 1 to October 14 with a three fish/person/day limit; and then from October 15 to December 31 the limit jumps to five fish/person/day. In all periods only one fish may be greater than 21" and there is a ten fish/vessel maximum.



Shaina Boyle's big blue.

Bluefish regulations in the region will likely be the same this year, three fish/person/day with no minimum size. As last year, this includes small skipjack bluefish. Shaina Boyle caught this 36" bluefish when fishing with her father Gary Vandemoortele (RISAA members).

*Capt. Dave Monti holds fish in the above photo.*

**Bluefish.** The Division of Marine Fisheries is not proposing to change the recreational bluefish regulation for 2024. So, the regulations are likely to be the same as last year. For private vessels and shore anglers the limit is three fish/person/day year round with no minimum size. For-hire vessels have a five fish/person/day limit. This applies to small skipjack bluefish too.

**Scup** are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. However, recruitment has been below average from 2017 to 2022. So, 2024 regulations must be changed to achieve a 10 percent reduction in recreational harvest. Several proposals have been

shared including increasing the minimum size from 10.5" to 11", reducing the possession limit (in some cases from 30 fish last year to 20 fish, even one proposal reduces possession to 9 fish) as well as reducing the season lengths. There are adjustment suggestions for the minimum shore size too from 9.5" to 10" or keeping it the same. A lot of options are still at play here.

Summer flounder is not overfished but overfishing is occurring, so fish managers have been asked to achieve a 28 percent reduction in recreational harvest. There are a few options on the table to reach this reduction including increasing the minimum size from 18" to 18.5" or increasing the minimum size to 19". If the minimum size increases to 19" the season could be expanded (starting April 1 rather than May 3) with an enhanced bag limit. There are a lot of moving parts with all options in regard to minimum sizes, season length and the possession limit change. We will have to see where this one ends up.

Black sea bass are not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring. The Division has not proposed changes to black sea bass regulation at this time. The minimum size will likely be the same as last year 16.5" for private anglers with a season starting May 22 to August 26 with a two fish/person/day limit with an increase to three fish/person/day from August 27 to December 31. The party and charter boat sector has a 16" minimum size, however the season does not start until June 18 with a two fish limit that then increases to six fish/person/day on Sept. 1

For regulation updates in Connecticut visit <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/Saltwater/Saltwater-Fishing>; for Massachusetts regulations <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/recreational-saltwater-fishing-regulations>; and for Rhode Island regulations visit <https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/marine-fisheries/marine-fisheries-regulations>.

Dave Monti holds a master captain's license and charter fishing license. He serves on a variety of boards and commissions and has a consulting business focusing on clean oceans, habitat preservation, conservation, renewable energy, and fisheries related issues and clients. Forward fishing news and photos to [dmontifish@verizon.net](mailto:dmontifish@verizon.net) or visit [www.nofluekifishing.com](http://www.nofluekifishing.com).



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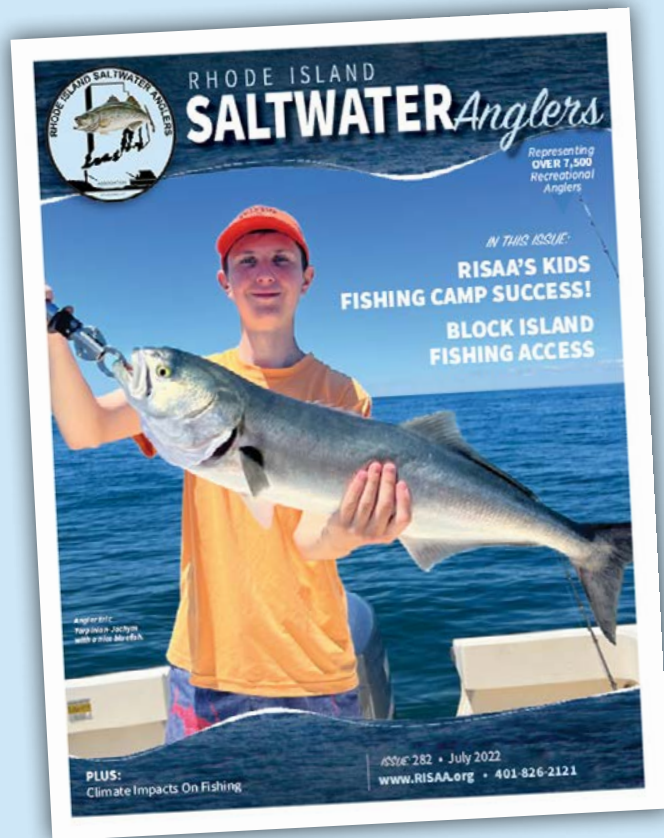
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# HOW TO WIN THE LOTTERY... RISAA STYLE

If you buy a Powerball lottery ticket, your chances of winning a modest six hundred dollar prize (before taxes) is one in 36,525. Not exactly favorable odds. Or you could attend one of the RISAA spring seminars and win what could be the fishing trip of a lifetime with odds of twenty to one and no cost to enter. How? Each year, through the generosity of local charter captains, the RISAA Charter Committee arranges for free charter trips to be raffled to members at the monthly seminars. There is no cost to enter and you have a great chance to enjoy a memorable day on the water as well as learn from some of the best and most experienced charter captains around.



Trips are usually for two to four anglers, depending on the captain's boat and style of fishing. Most outings are bay, inshore or near-shore, but we have raffled offshore trips as well. In 2023, the Committee organized charters with Captain Eric Thomas (Teezer), Captain Rene Letourneau (On the Rocks Charters), Captain Jim Turner (Westport Point Fishing Charters), Captain Jonathan Lewie (Pura Vida Fishing Charters), Captain Al Passerelli (Over Easy) and others just to name a few.



RISAA monthly magazine and a story recounting the trip, written by the participants. However, the captains don't offer these trips for their own benefit, they do it to promote the sport they love and give back to the angling community. Captain Eric Thomas said; "Being a teacher, I love to teach and having willing students from RISAA is a highlight of my year."



The winners never know what kind of excitement they will experience. Member Bob Antos caught the largest fish he ever landed on one of our 2023 summer charters. Member and Cooking Your Catch Editor Paula Smalec called her trip with Captain Rene Letourneau "The best fishing trip of my life" as she and another angler landed and released over fifty stripers, most of them slot length or above.

Whether you are relatively inexperienced or have been fishing for years, the RISAA Charter Raffle is a great way to expand your fishing horizons, make new friends, and perhaps a memory to last a lifetime. Come to the monthly seminars, enter the no cost raffle and cross your fingers.

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# SOME LIFE LESSONS LEARNED FROM FISHING

By: Rick Black

I caught my first fish on Flat Head Lake, Kalispell, Montana at the age of six. My mother's attempt to memorialize it fell woefully short. All she captured with her camera was my body and extended arm minus the hand holding my prized Dolly Varden Trout. Since I loved my mother, I forgave her. **Lesson learned:** Focus on the fish and not the angler or, better yet, both.

Despite my advanced age, I still remember that catch vividly. It marked the beginning of a lifetime love of fishing. We lived in a shoreside house on Flat Head Lake, which allowed for spectacular views of the morning and evening rises and falls of the sun and access to world class fishing. While my father was not a fisherman, he did put me in an environment where I could learn at the knees of some very accomplished neighbors. **Lesson learned:** If you fish, be that good neighbor and teach another.

“It is my expectation that our grandsons will become advocates and stewards to protect the valuable resources of the sea.”

Fishing and boats have been a constant in my life. I have owned over two dozen power and sail boats over my 70 plus years. The first was a used, wooden, gray, flat bottom skiff that was actually a Christmas present to me and my younger brother. I don't remember my age at the time other than I was not yet ten. We lived up the street from Rawson's Pond, Cumberland, RI, which was a five-minute walk at most. We kept the boat in a neighbor's yard that abutted the water. It served as a great fishing platform for both the pond and the Abbott Run Stream feeding it from an upriver reservoir. I fished every chance I got with my best friend for perch, sunfish, blue gills, pickerel, largemouth bass, and I occasionally got lucky landing either a rainbow or brook trout. **Lesson learned:** Embrace the outdoors, enjoy boats, and nurture friendships with those who are like-minded.

Fast forward to 2023. It is 5:00 a.m. on a fall Saturday at our home on Harbour Island, Narragansett, RI. I am up as is our oldest grandson (13) for this is probably our last opportunity to target tautog because of the demands of his fall sports. Grandsons who love the sea, fishing, and just mucking about in harbors and boats,



as much as I do, not only bring immense joy, but also a chance to impart some life lessons. The boys have developed a keen appreciation and respect for the sea as well as the regulations governing the state's recreational fisheries. Following the rules is not an option, but a requirement. And that extends to properly catching and releasing fish to reduce mortality rates. The fish that we do keep, we eat. They understand being wasteful is not acceptable, especially with fish we have caught. **Lesson learned:** Model the sportsmanship you expect in others and always play by the rules.

As grandchildren get older, sharing time with them on the water becomes more cherished and special for there are now the competing distractions of organized sports and a newly emerged one: girls. **Lesson learned:** Don't squander an opportunity to go fishing with family or friends when it presents itself.

Our neighbors affectionately call us the fish mongers even though we are not selling our catch. However, we are known

to share some of our bounty; hence, the label. While I have been offered money to help defray our costs of fuel, tackle, bait, etc., I politely refuse and point out, if they did, it would be the most expensive fish they will ever eat, albeit also the freshest! Furthermore, I am a recreational fisherman and do not have a commercial license. **Lesson learned:** Neighbors will always appreciate every gift of fresh fish. Besides, you cannot sell fish if you do not have a commercial license.

A number of years ago, I said that I would never gear up to run offshore for tuna. Mistake, big mistake. And then one conversation led to another about the adrenaline rush of hooking, fighting, and landing a tuna. So I decided to pay a visit to Matt Conti and his sister, Elisa Cahill, at Snug Harbor to set me up with a couple of tuna jigging rods. Armed with the rods, jigs, some intel and tips from a friend, and accompanied by a neighbor, I made my maiden voyage offshore on our boat. As luck would have it, I landed my first tuna; a bluefin weighing 50-pounds. To say I was "hooked" is a gross understatement! My tuna rod arsenal is up to six and will likely not stop there as now the grandsons have also gotten the bug. The oldest landed his first tuna this past summer; a nice yellowfin that bettered mine. **Lesson learned:** Never say "never."

With a number of first place tournament finishes over the past four years, it is not just about the winning, but the sportsmanship. It is how you present yourself and play the game. It is gratifying to see the grandsons so focused on handling a fish unassisted, once hooked, until landed on deck. The only help they will accept is from someone with a net or a gaff for tuna, which has become a targeted species over the past two years. They are as competitive amongst themselves as they are with other competitors. Only occasionally do they need to be reminded that they should congratulate one another, as well as other competitors. **Lesson learned:** Sportsmanship is not only giving it your best, but acknowledging the achievement of others.

It is my expectation that our grandsons will become advocates and stewards to protect the valuable resources of the sea. Before our oldest grandson was ten years old, he developed a keen awareness of marine biology and some of the problems plaguing our oceans. He first championed the elimination of plastic straws. He even challenged a Boston seafood restaurant waiter when delivered a glass of milk with a plastic straw. He has continued his efforts with the movement to ban balloons and asks me to turn our boat around when he spots a floating, partially deflated helium balloon in the water so he can pick it up before an unsuspecting fish or sea turtle engulfs it. **Lesson learned:** The future health of our fisheries is contingent upon the advocacy of the youth of today. So take a kid fishing. They are our fisheries' future! 🐟

*Rick Black is an active RISAA member who is busy teaching his grandsons some important life lessons learned from fishing.*



RISAA ANGLING

## Hall of Fame

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 Bleczynski	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

# RIGGING SOFT PLASTICS FOR STRIPED BASS

By: Peter Jenkins

*As you are reading this article, the migration of striped bass into Rhode Island waters is little more than a month away. More and more anglers know the best way to catch these new arrivals is with soft plastic lures. Here, Peter Jenkins shares some tips for selecting and rigging soft plastics so they “swim” right and fool the fish.—ed.*

The number of surf casters and light tackle enthusiasts casting soft plastics for striped bass is increasing each season. Whether the application is a weedless bait on light tackle in the early season or rigged on a jig head for a summer night in the surf we see more use of soft plastics now than ever. Along with the advances in soft baits themselves have come innovations in rigging soft plastics for striped bass.

## Wide Variety of Shapes & Sizes

The popularity and innovation stem in large part from the versatility of soft plastics. There are a wide variety of profiles with soft, pliable bodies that produce a life-like action. Some argue that the supple materials also give soft plastics a better mouth-feel than hard lures. The benefit being that the gamefish would be less likely to let go immediately after striking. Also, many manufacturers impregnate their soft plastics with scents of bunker and sand eel when creating baits to target striped bass and other northeast gamefish. In the simplest terms there are three designs used in saltwater:

- Jerk Baits with inline tails of various shapes. When fishing jerk baits the rod tip creates the action, and it is more subtle.
- Paddle Tails with a wide flat tail oriented horizontally to the body of the bait. Paddle tails are a much more active bait, and the design of the bait creates the action.
- Grub Tails or pigtails also have a lot of action and are used in smaller soft plastics and to enhance a bucktail jig.
- Beyond this point, there are a dizzying number of options that would require a series of articles to scratch the surface.

## Pre-rigged Options

Anglers can purchase some soft plastics pre-rigged on a jig head; examples include the Savage Gear Sandeel and the Ron Z Original Soft Baits. Also, some baits like the Hogy Slow Tail and the Tsunami Swim Shads have the weight molded into the bait. If you are just getting into soft plastics one of these options might be the place to start. These baits are optimized for action and casting efficiency and eliminate the trial and error of matching hooks and heads with different baits.



Pre-rigged option

## Rigging Options for Soft Plastics

Centering Pin Springs are a simple way of attaching the hook to the head of a soft plastic bait. Rigged right, these can be tossed in skinny water and are effectively weedless. The Owner Beast Hooks are popular for this application as are the center pin hooks developed for Albie Snax. Worm Hooks also create a weedless presentation through simple rigging, and the length helps stiffen the body of the lure which allows for better casts. Anglers will make a few turns with tying thread behind the hook eye to create a surface to apply Zap A Gap Thin just before they permanently seat the hook in the bait. The Mustad Big Bite Soft Plastic Hook is a popular choice for this application.



Center pin hook

Jig head

Additionally, there is an assortment of jig heads on which to secure your bait. You may prefer one or another based on hook strength, size, the preferred method of attachment, or color. The MagicTail Kill Shot has been among the more popular due to its heavy 8/0 hook and ridged collar designed to provide a secure attachment. The Jeck's Bullet Bucktail has built a strong following in short order in part because the rear of the jig head is flat, allowing a flush fit with the bait. This improves durability, and the flush fit positively impacts castability. With any jig head, it's a good idea to super glue the area used to secure the soft plastic to the jig.



Rigged soft plastics

## Pro Tip

Let's address a common challenge when rigging soft plastics for any gamefish regardless of the hook and method selected. That is: «Where to enter the bait to ensure it swims properly?» Ideally, you do not want to pull the plastic off the hook/ jig head repeatedly in an attempt to get it right, but an improperly rigged soft plastic will twist on the retrieve, create an unnatural action in the water, and send twists up your line, causing “wicked tangles” in your braid in the future. The first step is to lay the hook or jig head on top of the plastic, to see where the hook and ultimately the bend would exit the body with the bait snug to the head while maintaining a straight but not overly stretched bait. Mark that point either with your forefinger and thumb or some anglers nick that location using the hook point to maintain orientation.

When rigging a weightless hook, you want to start and stay in the center of the bait until you reach the target location and then exit the bait through the center as well. Staying on the center line is all the more critical with unweighted hooks.

When using a jig head hold the bait with your thumb and forefinger, start in the center, and thread the body onto the jig head, pushing the hook through the marked point and continuing to slide the bait forward until it contacts the jig head. If you have a flush connection a little Zap A Gap at the juncture will enhance durability.



## Avoid This Common Error

Many jig heads have some type of retention ridges or hooks to secure the soft plastic. Some excellent examples are the Z-Man TT Headlockz HD, Hogy Barbarian Jig Hook, and Mustad Elite Bullet Jig Head; but with some materials or on smaller, thinner profile baits these retention methods can split and ruin the bait. So be mindful of using a strong hook with a bulky retention method with smaller and harder plastics as they may split. This is probably the perfect time for a jig head with a bare hook utilizing the thread and super glue method described above or one of the jig heads from Owner mentioned above. At the end of the day when rigging soft plastics, “practice makes perfect.” Now more than ever, you can rig a soft plastic bait easily and for just about any surf or light tackle situations. 🐟

*Peter Jenkins is an experienced light-tackle angler, President of the American Saltwater Guides Association and owner of Saltwater Edge in Middletown, RI. [Saltwateredge.com](http://Saltwateredge.com)*

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P.O. Box 1467, Coventry, RI 02816  
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monti@risaa.org • 401-480-3444

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Bob Marco  
marco@risaa.org

### POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Scott Travers  
travers@risaa.org

### NEWSLETTER

Scott Travers  
travers@risaa.org

### SALTWATER FISHING SHOW

Robert Murray  
murray@risaa.org • 401-378-5895

### SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

David Michel, Chair  
michel@risaa.org • 401-952-8697

### SURFCASTERS COMMITTEE

Ron Barnes, Chair  
barnes@risaa.org • 508-958-6781

### TAG & RELEASE PROGRAM

Robert Murray, Coordinator  
murray@risaa.org • 401-378-5895

### TOURNAMENTS COMMITTEE

Karlis Kaugars  
kaugars@risaa.org

### WELCOME COMMITTEE

Dawn Filliatreault Wood, Chair  
wood@risaa.org • 401-263-3919

*If you would like more information or would like to join a committee contact:*

**Scott Travers • Travers@risaa.org**

**MAGAZINE DESIGN & LAYOUT:** Eddy Stahowiak - LBEddy9@gmail.com

# NIGHT-TIME CRABBING

## LEGISLATION—HOUSE BILL 7440

By: Fred DeFinis

Currently, Rhode island does not allow the harvesting of blue crabs at night while our neighboring states of Connecticut and Massachusetts do. As someone who grew up fishing and harvesting shellfish in Connecticut, I remember night crabbing as a popular pastime and recall stories my late father told of enjoying it as far back as the 1930's. Unlike other fisheries management decisions that are determined via regulation, the prohibition of night-time crabbing was instituted some time ago via legislation. Although it is not clear why this was done, it is a departure from the norm. The RISAA legislative Committee has initiated an effort to promote legislation that would put the regulation of night-time crabbing in the hands of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) as is normally done with other marine species. LC member Carl Tiska has spearheaded this effort with admirable results to date.

On the House side, Representative Jennifer Boylan, a member of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee has initiated H 7440. In the Senate, Senator Matthew LaMountain, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Environment & Agriculture has introduced a parallel bill supporting this effort. As of this writing, the House bill will be given a preliminary hearing on February 29th.

It is important to note that approval of this legislative change will not automatically allow night-time harvest of blue crabs. DEM regulations currently prohibit night-time crabbing since that is what the current legislation requires. If H 7440 passes, then DEM may consider opening night-time harvest of blue crabs if they assess that the change is warranted. That proposal for a change to the current regulations would go forward to the RI Marine Fisheries Council, likely in 2025. If the Council agrees with the proposal, then they would make a recommendation to the DEM



director for approval, and the DEM Director would make the final decision.

What H 7440 would do is allow for DEM to start the conversation through their regulatory process. In terms of preventing excessive harvest, DEM could manage the night-time fishing through various tools (e.g. setting regulations on size, sex, season, hour openings, gear permitted, area closures, special permits required). DEM would evaluate these during the regulatory process. DEM could place limits on night-time crabbing if night-time crabbing resulted in excessive harvest, although that is not expected.

The current status of the blue crab population is unknown as DEM has not conducted a formal stock assessment on the species. DEM stated that they do not have a reason to believe that the stock is overfished or that overfishing is occurring, but they do not have evidence to prove this specifically. One of the ten Principal Marine Biologists at the DEM Marine Fisheries Division has blue crabs in her portfolio. She monitors the status of the blue crab population, evaluates interannual harvest for the species as well as looks at the scientific survey data.

This legislation marks the first time RISAA has been involved in sponsoring legislation through inception in terms of helping draft the bill(s), gaining sponsorship and following through to the end of the legislative process. This effort is a prime example of the tireless work of our many volunteers to preserve and protect our interests as anglers. 🐞

*Fred DeFinis is Secretary of the Legislative Committee, Second Vice President of RISAA and Editor of this publication.*

“This effort is a prime example of the tireless work of our many volunteers to preserve and protect our interests as anglers.”



# EXCITING CHANGES FOR THE 2024 TOURNAMENT SEASON

This year, RISAA tournaments will be undergoing several changes – with the largest change being that we will now hold two parallel season-long tournaments, one for the traditional weigh-in and one for catch and release. For catch and release tournaments, the angler will photograph the fish together with a ruler approved by the Tournaments Committee. The second major change is that the special tournaments will now have both a team and individual division.

The tournaments committee would like to remind all members that our tournaments are strictly for recreational angling – if you hold a commercial license, no fish caught during your commercial fishing trips may be entered into any RISAA tournament.



Could this be a winner?

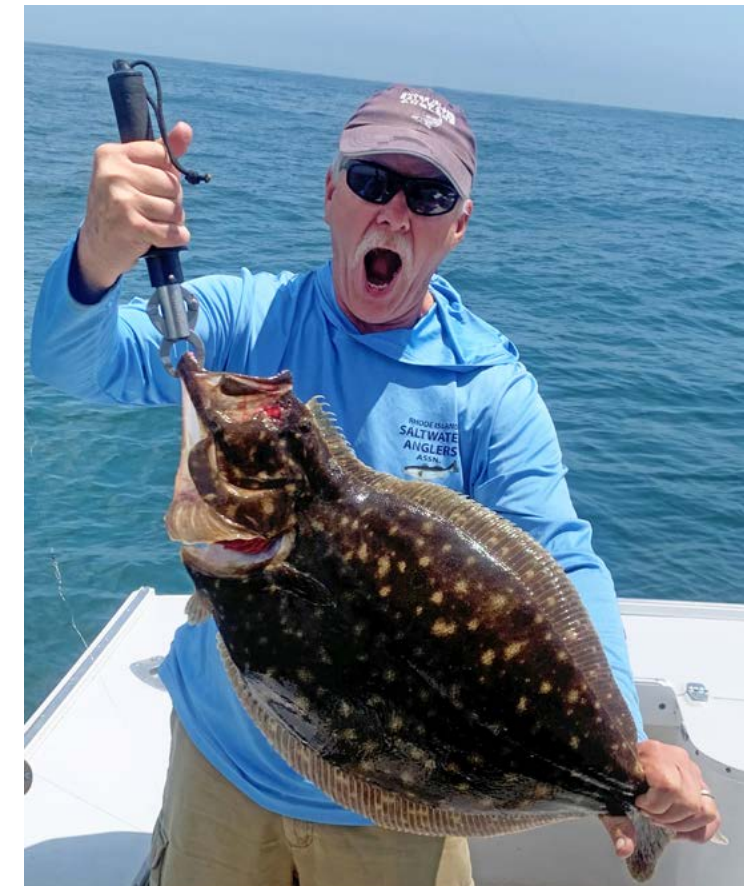
### Yearlong Individual Species Changes

- There will be a new catch and release category based on total measurement from nose to fork.
- Reinstated striped bass in the catch and release category.
- Reinstated cod (due to fluctuating rules and regulations).
- Removed the kayak special groups and will treat all kayak catches as part of the boat division.

### Special Tournaments

This year, RISAA will hold four special tournaments.

- A Fluke tournament, June 28 – July 7.
- A Juniors tournament July 19 – 28, with prizes awarded to our juniors based on the most species caught.
- A Bluefish tournament, August 9 - 18
- A Tautog tournament, October 11 - 20



Rich Hittinger with a doormat.

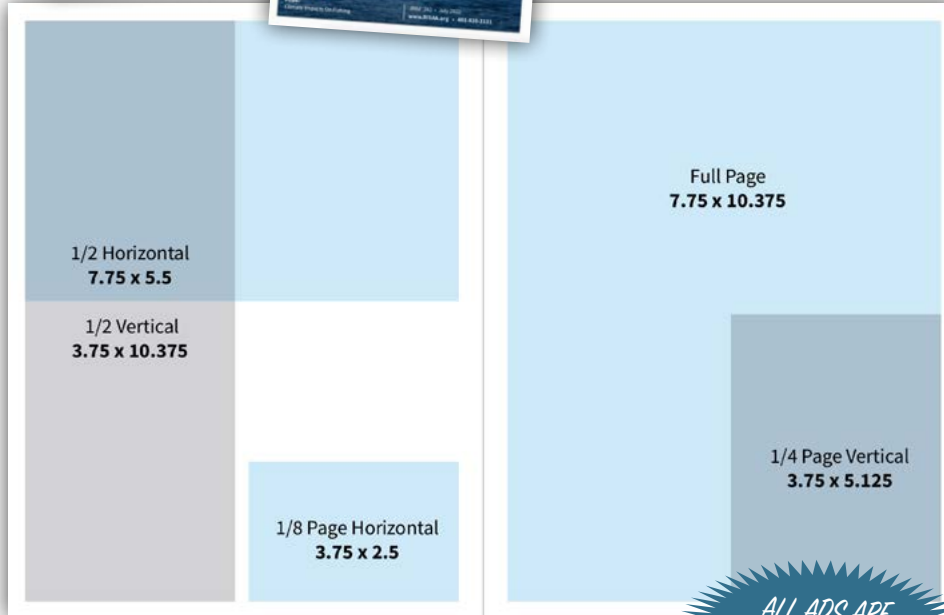
For the Fluke, Bluefish and Tautog tournaments, there will be two divisions – one for teams of two anglers and one for individual anglers. Any member may participate in only one of the two divisions, but not both. For the team division, we will still have largest 4 fish count towards final standings, while for the individual division the largest 2 fish will be counted.

The prize payouts will be for the top five places in each division at \$100, \$75, \$50, \$30 and \$20 in the form of a voucher to your favorite RISAA-affiliated bait and tackle store. 🐞

# Advertise *with* RISAA

## HELP YOUR BUSINESS, RISAA & THE FISH!

Below are the ad rates for **2024** as well as size specifications and other information. Contact RISAA at 401-826-2121 if you have further questions.



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Full Page	\$470	<b>\$360</b>
1/2 Page	\$290	<b>\$240</b>
1/4 Page	\$195	<b>\$150</b>
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## THANK YOU!

### The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers

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Business Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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 Length  One Issue  3 Months  6 Months  1 Year

Payment  Check Enclosed  Send Bill Monthly Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

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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:** \_\_\_\_\_

Ad Deadline: 15th of preceding month

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# JANUARY 29, 2024 MEMBERSHIP RIG TYING EVENT

Our January membership seminar took a different approach in starting the new year. Rather than having a seminar speaker come to present information to our membership, we had several members of our RISAA Board of Directors teach their favorite saltwater fishing rigs to the attendees. Individual stations were set up with an instructor, all supplies necessary to tie each rig, and instruction sheets listing the materials required and the steps to tie the rigs for the participating members to take with them.



Members tying the reduced snag tog rig.

Rich Hittinger, the RISAA 1st Vice President, helped members learn how to tie a double dropper loop rig. David Michel, the RISAA Sargeant at Arms, helped people learn and practice both the palomar knot and the uni knot to uni knot for tying braid to fluorocarbon or monofilament. Bob Murray, RISAA Board member, helped members learn how to tie a standard fluke rig with a dropper loop for a bucktail and a trailer with a squid skirt. Richard Reich, also a RISAA Board member, helped participants learn how to tie his well-known two hook Snafu rig for catching tautog. Finally, Scott Travers, RISAA Executive Director, helped members learn how to tie a reduced snag single hook tautog rig like the one used by Captain Dave Monti.

Anglers took turns tying rigs and learning knots at each station. When they were finished, they either remained at the station to tie another rig or moved to another station to learn something else. It was great to see so many members actively participating in the event. There were more members at this event than we normally



Bob Murray demonstrates the standard fluke rig.

have. We saw lots of familiar faces and plenty of new members as well as others who don't regularly attend the monthly seminars.

In fact, the event ran a bit longer than the monthly seminars usually run as everyone was so involved and having such a good time no one wanted the evening to end! By the end of the event, everyone who attended had a bag full of new fishing rigs they had tied to use for the upcoming season. More importantly, everyone left with greater knowledge of how to catch more fish, new skills on how to create a variety of fishing rigs, and instructions on how to make as many more of each rig as they wanted.



Due to the success of this program we will be having more hands-on, interactive events like this mixed into our seminar schedule this year. Feel free to contact me if there is something you would like to see demonstrated, or explained, or if there is some other topic of interest you would like covered in our seminar series.

# 2023 FOUNDATION DONATIONS



## Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Foundation

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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**With your help, we can continue to work within the political system to safeguard the rights and traditions of recreational fishing.**

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Donations ONLY accepted from individuals. No company or organization check can be accepted. (R.I. Law)

### Political Action Committee

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