RHODE ISLAND
SALTWATER Anglers

Representing
OVER 7,500
Recreational Anglers



IN THIS ISSUE:

VAMOS A PESCAR SUCCESS!

PLUS: ***2026 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS***

ISSUE: 315 • September / October 2026
www.RISAA.org • 401-826-2121

EVENTS & MEETINGS

ALERT!

NEW SEMINAR LOCATION

West Warwick VFW
197 Providence Street
West Warwick, RI 02893

September 28
SEMINAR
Al Gag from Al Gag's Lures will be talking about innovations coming in soft plastics

October 26
SEMINAR
Mike Aiello will be talking about spearfishing in RI

November 30
SEMINAR
RIDEM Enforcement Officer will be presenting on regulations and humorous stories from the field

December 28
SEMINAR
RISAA Annual DIY Night with knot tying, rig making, and how to create other essential items to make everyone's season more successful in 2027

RECREATIONAL FISHING IS WORTH

$419 MILLION

TO THE RHODE ISLAND ECONOMY AND OVER

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The Official Magazine of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association

Published Monthly

RISAA
PO BOX 1467
Coventry, RI 02816

www.RISAA.org

FROM THE HELM

QUICK PEEK!
WELCOME TO SEPTEMBER!

This season has been outstanding, in one way or another. The Tournament Committee used a cell phone app for 2 species specific tournaments earlier this year. The results from those who participated in the tournaments were mixed and the only thing most people agreed on was that the app, which relied on the length of a fish to be measured by the angler at the time of catch, would be a great basis for RISAA to hold a catch and release striped bass tournament at some point in the future. Hold onto your tournament slips, we will be still using the same system for all RISAA Tournaments for the foreseeable future. Some affiliated bait and tackle shops have been running out of RISAA Tournament slips. The slips are available on the RISAA website in the MEMBERS AREA for download and for RISAA members to print and have with them in the event a tournament worthy fish is caught. Carry a few in your tackle box just in case.

We have also been very active this year on several regulatory and environmental issues. Check the Watch Column for more information. Other activities include our RISAA Youth Fishing Camp, at which we were able to give away a FREE saltwater fishing rod to every youth participant, due in part to a large donation from the RI Breakers. Volunteer involvement continued this season with the Vamos a Pescar Program teaching members of RI's urban core the value and enjoyment of recreational saltwater fishing, and our outreach extended to several other programs including a first ever shark tagging trip in association with Adoption RI.

Finally, RISAA's Surf Casting Committee Chair, Paul Chapman, was just accepted onto the USA Surf Fishing Team. Soon, he will be in Italy fishing for Team USA. Congratulations Paul!

We have had several requests for partnerships with youth programs from communities in Woonsocket, Tiverton, New Bedford, and other areas for late season events this year and look forward to events for next year.

As you can imagine, as more people are interested in RISAA and our programs, we need volunteers like you. Please consider helping to spread your knowledge to the next generation of saltwater anglers by volunteering for an upcoming program. You can become as involved as you would like. Many of us find working with new people to be very rewarding and the new anglers are always very appreciative of our efforts to help them be successful. Please reach out to me anytime if you would like more information on our volunteer opportunities.



Enjoy the rest of the season and make it your best ever! I will see you out there.

Scott **TRAVERS,** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WE SHARE THE OCEAN RESOURCES WITH COMMERCIAL FISHING

As recreational anglers we share our target resources with the commercial fishery. Here in Rhode Island it often seems to many anglers that we do not get a fair share of that resource. I often hear anglers ask why commercial fishermen have what seem to be much more generous regulations than we do. For example, they can take up to 300 pounds per day of fluke as small as 14" while rec anglers can only take fluke that are 19" of larger. The same is true for black sea bass where the minimum size for commercial harvest is 11" while the rec minimum size is 16". What makes this even more devastating for the summer finfish fishery in RI is that RIDEM has now instituted a Summer Aggregate Program for commercial fishing. This allows larger vessels to catch their weekly limit in one trip, so a large dragger can drag Narragansett Bay for miles until they land 2100 pounds of fluke. This encourages large vessels to target species like fluke and sea bass when the daily limit would not and therefore put much more fishing pressure on the species that are important recreationally during summer months.

The commercial fishery is in the business of harvesting fish to sell and feed people, while the rec fishery is primarily fishing for pleasure. They do provide a fresh source of fish to the market all year long, fishing even when the weather is not what rod and reel fishermen would be able to stand. On the other hand, most saltwater anglers do take a significant portion of their legal catch home to eat, so this fishery is also providing food for the local population.

Commercial fishing includes everything from fixed nets, commonly called fish traps, to draggers, gill netters, fish pots, rod and reel harvesters, purse seiners and long liners. Rec anglers also include everything from shore anglers to private boat anglers, party and charter boat anglers and cast netters.

The key species for commercial fisheries include non-finfish such as lobster, scallop and squid as well as some finfish which are not very important to rec anglers such as monkfish, herring and mackerel but all of the important recreational species are also targeted by some portion of the commercial fishery. These include tuna, cod, fluke, striped bass, sea bass, bluefish, tautog, and scup.

In the last 20 years in New England the pounds of finfish landed commercially and the value of those landings has decreased significantly. According to NOAA from 2012 to 2021, the pounds of finfish landed in New England decreased from 341,884,000 to 170,080,000 (more than 50%) https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3//2024-03/FEUS-2021-final-0.pdf

The same report showed the landing value in actual dollars went from $226,185,000 to $215,133,000. A decrease in dollars while the adjusted value accounting for inflation would be $176,839,000 (a decrease of 22%). This is while electronics, communication and gear have continued to improve. This is likely due to decreased stocks of fish caused by over harvest. In the same report recreational trips decreased from 22,538 in 2012 to 16,959 in 2021 (a 25% decrease). At the same time recreational fishing expenditures in New England have grown overall in inflation-adjusted dollars

https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/socioeconomics/fisheries-economics-united-states-methods

These facts show that recreational fishing is becoming more important to local economies while commercial finfish harvest is becoming less important.

It is clear that many fish are killed and discarded dead by draggers and gillnetters, especially when we see hundreds of birds diving behind these boats as they haul back their nets and sort their catch. Many of us also see thousands of floaters behind draggers after they have passed through an area. On a few occasions I have heard of striped bass being discarded by draggers who have run into a school of stripers had dragged them up only to have to discard them dead. Commercial fishermen will blame much of this waste on regulations that require them to sort sizes and species and discard smaller fish, but some of it is due to hauling up non-target species which are dead in the net by the time they are landed on the deck or potentially from "high grading" a practice of keeping the best or largest fish and discarding others.

Both rec anglers and commercial fishermen have much in common.

(Continued on page 9)

MEMBER PHOTOS



This notable catch was made by RISAA Member John Sootbeer. This was his personal best bluefish with an unofficial weight of 15.88 pounds!

CONGRATULATIONS JOHN!

SEND US YOUR PICS!

If you have a memorable outing, send your member photos to the editor definis@risaa.org

RISAA MAGAZINE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Contact Fred DeFinis at definis@risaa.org

THE WELCOME COMMITTEE

Dawn **Filliatreault Wood,** CHAIR

Welcome NEW Members!

JULY

Anthony Gurrera - New York, NY
Tim McCrohon - Worcester, MA
Carl Nowiszewski - Westerly, RI
Greg Werner - Munroe, NY

AUGUST

James Borteck - Medfield, MA
Vlad Botezatu - Smithfield, RI
Brenton Harries - East Greenwich, RI
Victor Langlais - North Kingstown, RI
Chad Phillips - Portsmouth, 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.

RHODE ISLAND
SALTWATER ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

FLY FISHING COMMITTEE 2026 OUTINGS

Oct. 2 - Charlestown - 3 PM with Jim Jaques
Oct. 22 - Narrow River - 8 AM with John Edwards
Oct. 27 - Charlestown - 11 AM with Jim Jaques
Nov. 9 - Narrow River - 10 AM with John Edwards
TBD - ANNUAL MEETING

John W. Edwards II • edwards@risaa.org

The Voice of Southern NE Fisherman

SHORE ANGLERS
RISAA has active groups in surf casting and fly fishing, with regularly scheduled outings, inter-club contests and social events.

KAYAK ANGLERS
RISAA Kayak Committee has over 100 members with a variety of group outings and events. Have more fun and be safer on the water as part of a group.

FAMILY FISHING
RISAA offers free memberships to juniors and sponsors family fishing trips at discounted prices. There are special "junior" tournaments and prizes too. We also offer college scholarships through the RISAA Foundation.

HEAD-BOAT ANGLERS
RISAA arranges various head-boat trips throughout the season from squid fishing in the spring to Cod and Tog in the Fall. RISAA subsidizes the cost to keep admission affordable to all.

HOWEVER YOU FISH
RISAA will help you become a better angler and add your voice in matters of conservation and regulation of our precious fisheries.

- Monthly seminars in person and online.
- Informative monthly magazine
- Advocating for your interests

Giving Back...

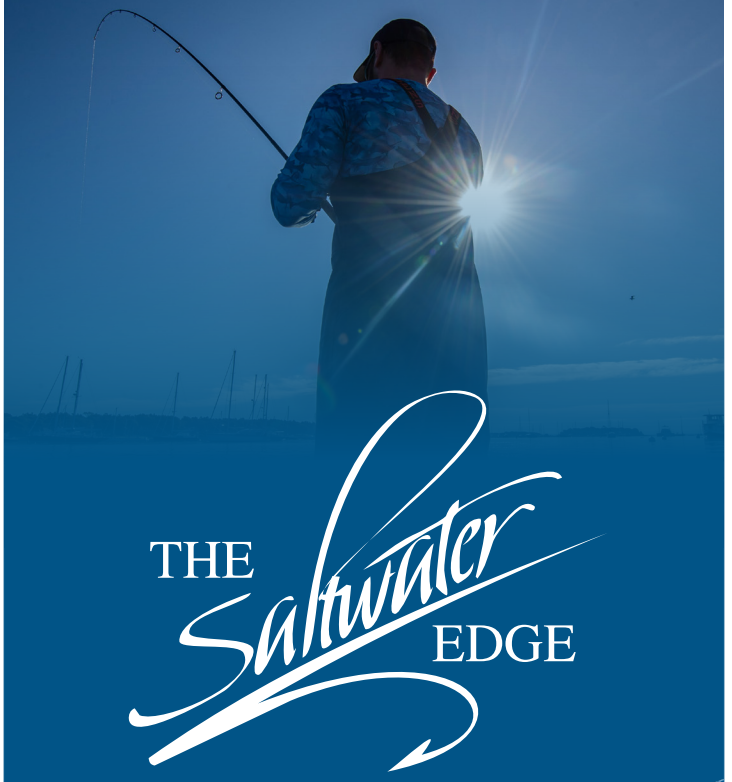
Each year, through The RISAA Foundation (a 501-C3 entity) we give back through:

- College scholarships to deserving students
- Sponsoring Youth Fishing Camp for 50 youngsters to attend free of charge.
- Grants for scientific research on fisheries and habitat.
- Grants for artificial reefs and dam removals.
- *And many more!*

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RUSS MACK'S HAMMERHEAD SHARK SURPRISE

By **Russ Mack**

"It was weird, it was cool, because we had been getting brown sharks and then we hooked into that…" said Russ Mack, a twenty-year-old fisherman with the knowledge and confidence earned by anglers twice his age. He fishes South County beaches and the deep waters with friend Lucas Holloway. They catch and release fish through all seasons and through ice fresh and salt, but as waters warm and southern species migrate north, recently they've been catching brown sharks in the night surf. He said they knew right away the fish they hooked on August 2 was very different. Russ Mack's hammerhead shark surprise, working the shoreline for prey, fell for an eel. **"The brown sharks, they fight the same, just a little solid pull then you pretty much reel in dead weight that's pulling against you. This one kept pulling and you couldn't get anything on it."** That odd feel, that heavy pull back, turned up to be a scalloped hammerhead shark.

From Maine to Connecticut, sharks have been seen this year at popular beaches and salt rivers. Newport boaters saw a hammerhead on July 13 at the surface, one was filmed swimming just a few feet off a Nantucket beach a week later and on July 24, the Atlantic Shark Institute tagged a scalloped hammerhead shark off Block Island, the first ever for the Institute. Some research indicates younger sharks are arriving, which may signal a population dynamic change. Plenty of striper fishermen have reeled in just half a bass this summer, which they call "getting sharked," likely from browns, also called sandbar sharks. DNA evidence indicates sharks may have been here for 450 million years, which is 200 million before Tyrannosaurus rex, so they're entitled to their share. Hammerheads prefer bony fish, stingrays, crabs and squid and use their broad heads, called a cephalofoil, and as their mouths are centered beneath the hammer, they scan sea floors for then press prey to the bottom Having eyes so far apart affords them 360° binocular depth perception to hunt for prey, like Russ's eel.

On a falling tide and rising moon, Russ and Lucas wanted to know what was patrolling off the beach. **"Is it true you paddled a kayak out there to set the bait?"** I asked. "**Yeah."** His delivery is consistently understated. It's a sign of his mettle**.** With Lucas on the rod, he puts on a PFD, paddles a sit-in kayak fifty or sixty yards out then releases an eel and weights, out where they know sharks are hunting.No big deal. **"I play it kind of careful. We get some looks about it,"** he said. He's pretty casual about this maneuver. **"It works fine."** He is honestly cool.

"Losing three-dollar hooks when you're catching sharks gets expensive," he said. Russ Mack's hammerhead shark surprise happened because he's an experienced fisherman and those folks tend to look down and shuffle their feet when asked for too many



details. He did say they use 65-pound line with wire leaders and barbless circle hooks because browns tend to hang in schools of stripers. For a while they used eight-ounce lead shots to sink eels but they got snagged in rocks so they lost a few bass and lead is costly to wallets and our environment. They switched to rocks secured with rubber bands and a kayak delivery. **"You can't cast rocks anywhere,"** Russ said with a laugh.

Russ Mack Is All About A Good Story

"I'm not a big photo guy. I've caught forty-pound fish, I have photos of some of them," he said because his focus is on releasing his catch. His fishing is all for sport and he keeps only the occasional fish for his parents, Sue and Doug. **"I'm a big fan of catch and release. You catch a forty-pound fish, you have that thing out of the water for five minutes, that thing's not swimming away. Mostly I'm not going for slot sized fish, I'm going for the nicer stuff, to have a story behind it."** He's careful with everything they catch. **"We try to take the best care of them that we can, we're walking them out past the break to let them go."** Russ is a much needed young conservation-minded angler and hopefuly he will keep a journal of his adventures so we can all benefit from his lifetime's worth of stories.

For a young man, he has spent a lot of time in and on the water. **"Me and my dad, we used to go down all the time, we used to catch 15, 20-pound fish from the surf for hours straight."** Is there a better story than one beginning with, "Me and my dad?" He says "fish" as a generality, as a unique noun, as a marker, because fish might mean trout or tuna and fish are what drives him. When asked how long he has been fishing, he said, **"I don't know. I couldn't tell you. The first fish I ever caught was with my dad at Old Mountain Field."** How many bass has he caught? **"This year or ever?"** "Either." **"No idea."** Russ values stories far more than cell phone pictures.

They fought that fish, that scalloped hammerhead shark, for more than two hours, trading off to keep the pressure on. When it was close to the beach, they saw its pectoral fin and, **"Eight or ten feet back we saw the tail fin. Then we were like, oh, that's a big shark."** A friend took a few pictures and a quick video as they pulled it into the whitewash, removed the hook, peeled off a lamprey from behind its anal fin and set them both free. They also both agreed to call it a night. He phoned his dad when it was over, then Declan at Breachway Bait & Tackle, and like Doug, Declan didn't really believe him at first, because it's remarkable. As expected, after posting about the night on Instagram, social media experts circled the two. They handled each comment with common sense and facts, relating that even in those lightning moments of such a surprise catch, they were wise enough to protect the hammerhead shark to ensure its survival. **"It might have been two minutes, from the moment we landed the fish to the moment it was back. We were not targeting a hammerhead. We're not there to kill fish. We're just there to have fun. We didn't drag that thing on the sand. When we let that thing go, it wasn't tired. You can see in the video, it just kicks and it goes."** Responding to one critic, Lucas explained the truth and added, **"Have a great day."** Classic polite dismissal.

"There's lots we can learn"





Russ's skills and passion for understanding fish reminded me of Frank Daignault, the great surfcaster and writer, who caught hundreds of big bass from the beach and loved telling how he did it. **"There's lots we can learn from that and do better, we weren't equipped for that at all. At most we were expecting a hundred-pound brown."** That's it, just a hundred pound brown shark. Just another day on the beach. They hope to measure length or girth on future sharks if they can do it quickly and safely and his belief in conservation should be applauded. If their catch inspires other people to target sharks in close, hopefully those anglers absorb Russ Mack and Lucas Holloway's level of respect and concern for shark survival.

"I was swimming out there that day. I was swimming 40 yards from where I dropped that bait," he said. While many are scrolling their phones, Russ is likely on a dark beach with his friends, catching, releasing and laughing, fearless to a point, respectful and curious."**Now that we have that hammerhead, imagine if we caught a big tiger or a white next? I don't want one of those, it would be fun but I don't want to deal with that."** Russ and Lucas have been back to that beach and have caught another brown shark. That makes 25 or so this year. Or maybe 30. He's not really keeping track.

Russ Mack is ready for the next fishing adventure, here or anywhere.

"I would one hundred percent do it again. One hundred percent."



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	7.20 lbs.	2012
Bluefish	Robert Matteson	20.46 lbs.	2017
Bonito	Micheal Neto	12.20 lbs.	2004
Cod	Robert Morel	49.10 lbs.	2001
False Albacore	Charles Bradbury	16.2 lbs.	2004
Fluke	Kyle Blount	15.65 lbs.	2006
Haddock	Nicholas Blount	7.85 lbs.	2004
Mahi Mahi	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	37.80 lbs.	2001
Pollock	Harry Templeton	27.70 lbs.	2001
Scup	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	3.74 lbs.	2014
Sea Robin	Bill Hubert	2.95 lbs.	2025
Shad	Kyle Paparelli	3.80 lbs.	2009
Squeteague	Robert Roy	10.50 lbs.	2006
Striped Bass	Peter Vican	77.40 lbs.	2011
Tautog	Joseph Bleczinski	18.90 lbs.	2015
Tuna - Albacore	Harley Benton	55.00 lbs.	1999
Tuna - Bluefin	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	193.88 lbs.	2009
Tuna - Yellowfin	Randy Pereschino	112.00 lbs.	2001
Winter Flounder	Michael Lanni	4.40 lbs.	1998

SHORE DIVISION

Species	*Angler*	*Weight*	*Year*
Black Sea Bass	Paul Chapman	4.9 lbs.	2025
Bluefish	Gilbert Bell	16.90 lbs.	2016
Bonito	Jack Sprengel, Jr.	9.99 lbs.	2007
False Albacore	Michael Tilelli	12.62 lbs.	2025
Fluke	Michael Tilelli	6.60 lbs.	2018
Scup	Charles Underhill	2.69 lbs.	2012
Shad	Jonathan Pickering	1.75 lbs.	2008
Squeteague	Robert Moeller	16.54 lbs.	2007
Striped Bass	Richard Reich	51.66 lbs.	2013
Tautog	Richard Gallipeau	11.20 lbs.	2009
Winter Flounder	Dick Geldard	4.40 lbs.	2009

Recent Hall of Famers shown in red





We both want to protect the ocean from potential impacts such as offshore wind energy and see fish stocks increase in abundance. And rec anglers we do not see conflict with much of the commercial fishery such as those fishing well offshore or those harvesting nonrecreational species, but it does not seem fair that draggers pulling large nets along the bottom should be permitted to scour the areas where we fish such as Narragansett Bay and the Sakonnet River. Recent reports indicate that as many as 5 or 6 draggers can be seen dragging up and down the West Passage including areas closer than a half mile from the beach at Scarborough.

Not only are some commercial harvest methods very wasteful of the fish resource by killing undersized fish and nontarget species, but also, they can physically change the environment by removing vegetation and scraping the bottom clean of necessary habitat. Many reports over the years have documented how these effects have changed the habitat and fishery in large areas: https://nmsstellwagen.blob.core.windows.net/stellwagen-prod/media/archive/library/pdfs/sbnms_mhe_report.pdf

https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1890/1051-0761(1998)8%5BS6:LDATSO%5D2.0.CO;2

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0165783601003009

Conflict between recreational anglers and commercial operations is seen in various ways. The simple fact that concentrated commercial harvest in nearshore areas like Narragansett Bay depletes the fish available for recreational anglers is conflict. But also, gill nets set across areas where rod and reel boaters drift makes it difficult to fish without losing gear and fish pots set all through a productive fishing area effectively takes those areas away from rod and reel anglers. This fixed gear occupies an area 24 hours a day at times when fishing with rod & reel may otherwise be very productive there.

My personal opinion is that fisheries managers should do whatever is reasonable to reduce conflicts between fisheries sectors. In this case, between recreational anglers and commercial operations. They should consider restricting dragging in Narragansett Bay during the summer season when recreational anglers depend on catching finfish in this area. They should also eliminate the summer aggregate program for species of importance to the recreational fishery. This would include summer flounder and black sea bass. Also, our current methods of commercial harvest need to be improved to make them more sustainable. Some methods such as fish pots seem less destructive than dragging and gill netting. Should we advocate for no nets in State waters similar to the restrictions in place in Florida waters? Should regulators require a Zero Discard rule like the European Union so that all fish brought on to a vessel must be retained? There are many other possible ways to help make commercial fishing more sustainable, but my experience tells me that the commercial fishing interests will resist these changes and will put their very strong political influence to work to stop any of these changes.

This issue continues to be an important problem to solve and we will not solve it quickly or easily, but because of the importance of this topic I believe we need to discuss it at all levels. Please feel free to send me your thoughts via email at hittinger@risaa.org .

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HELPING, 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 on November 19, 2026 via Zoom.

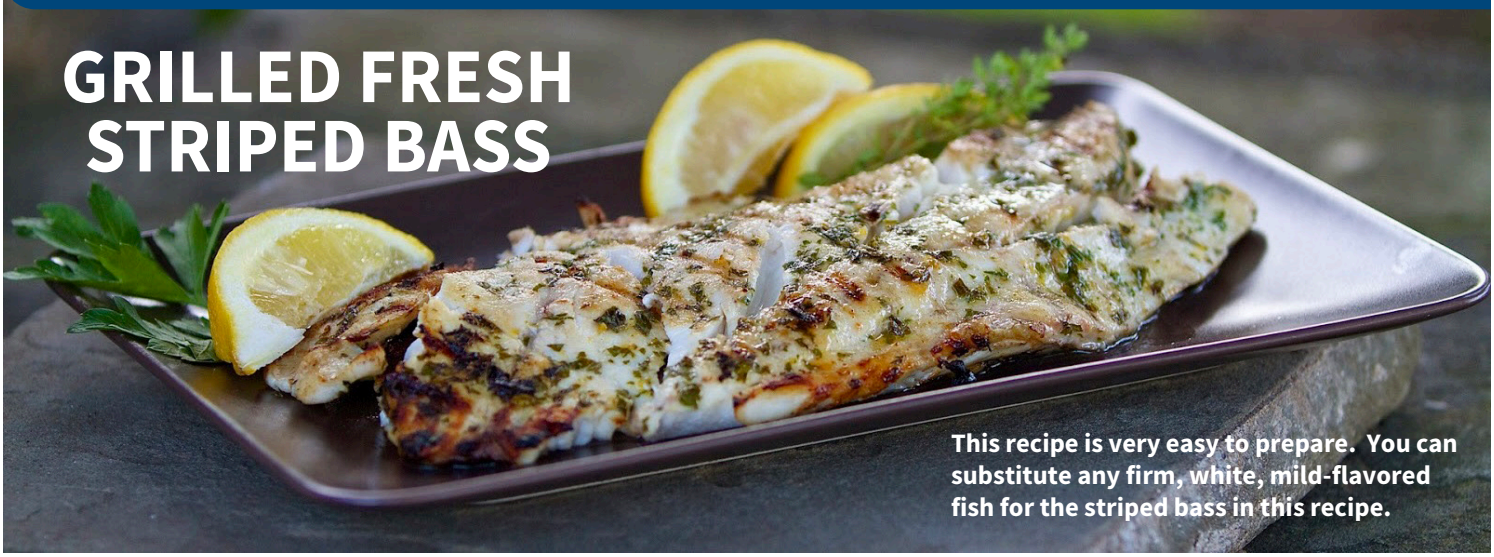
RISAA KAYAK COMMITTEE 2026 OUTING SCHEDULE

Oct 3	Sat	8:00 AM	Fogland Beach, Tiverton	12 Point View Drive, Tiverton 02878	Bass/Tautog	Rick Sullivan
Oct 9	Fri	6:00 AM	Monahan's Dock, Narragansett	State Pier No. 5, Narragansett 02882	Bass	Kirk Kamien
Oct 17	Sat	7:00 AM	Mackerel Cove, Jamestown	1 Beavertail Road, Jamestown 02835	Bass Tautog	Dane Buell
Oct 30	Fri	8:00 PM	Battery Park (Newport Bridge), Newport	107 Washington Street, Newport 02840	Squid	Carl Tiska
Nov 16	Mon	6:30 PM	Annual Meeting Location TBD		n/a	Kraig Ruth

COOKING YOUR CATCH

By: Paula **Smalec**

GRILLED FRESH STRIPED BASS



This recipe is very easy to prepare. You can substitute any firm, white, mild-flavored fish for the striped bass in this recipe.

Ingredients:

- 1 - 1¼ pound striped bass fillet
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced
- 2 teaspoons fresh chives, minced
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme, minced
- ¼ cup white wine
- ¼ cup olive oil
- zest and juice of ½ lemon
- salt and black pepper, to taste

Instructions:

In a bowl, stir together the minced parsley, chives, thyme, white wine, olive oil, lemon zest and lemon juice.

Place the striper fillet in a large, rimmed dish.

Pour ⅔ of the marinade over the fillet. Cover and let it marinate in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes. Reserve the remaining ⅓ of the marinade to use later.

Heat the grill to medium heat. Season the marinated fillet with salt and pepper.

Cook the fillet, skin side down for about 4 minutes. Flip and continue cooking the other side for another 4 - 6 minutes.

Place the whole fillet on a large platter, pour on the reserved marinade, and serve immediately.

Source: https://localfoodrocks.com/2014/08/grilled-fresh-striped-bass.html

Attention Members! Do you have a favorite seafood recipe to share with the membership in our magazine? Please submit the recipe with a photo of the finished dish to travers@risaa.org





UPCOMING SEMINAR

SEPTEMBER 28 @ 7PM

Al Gag - Soft Plastic Innovations

ALERT!
NEW SEMINAR LOCATION

West Warwick VFW
197 Providence Street
West Warwick, RI 02893

For more than 50 years, Al Gagliarducci — known throughout the angling world simply as Al Gag — has stood at the forefront of American lure innovation. From hand-poured jigs in a modest apartment workshop to national recognition and Hall of Fame honors, his career reflects relentless creativity, mechanical precision, and a deep understanding of how fish hunt. All beginning with crafting lures by hand, driven by a simple but powerful belief: if existing tackle didn't perform perfectly, he would design something better. That mindset gave rise to Al Gags Fishing Lures — a brand synonymous with performance-driven design and American-made craftsmanship, and to this day, every new lure is designed, developed and tested personally by Al on the water before reaching the marketplace — an approach that built credibility and loyalty across generations.



SPECIAL NOTICE! *This is an in person seminar at the West Warwick VFW 197 Providence St, 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.*

RISAA MAGAZINE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Contact Fred DeFinis at definis@risaa.org

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.







2026 VAMOS A PESCAR

Every season the RI Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), Division of Fish and Wildlife (RIDFW), Aquatic Resource Education Program (ARE) receives funds through a federal grant to help provide opportunities for those in the urban core of RI, especially Hispanic speaking members of the population, to learn how to fish recreationally. As we all know recreational saltwater fishing is a great way to help families provide locally sourced, healthy foods for their families, as well as provide a fun, positive, bonding experience for families. This year RISAA members Dave Leandro (Tournament Committee Chair) and Scott Travers (Executive Director) helped out with two of the Vamos a Pescar events hosted by the ARE program.

The first event was on Thursday, July 23, 2026, at India Point Park in Providence. Unbelievably, 100 persons were scheduled to attend coming in waves every 30 minutes. Aside from RISAA's volunteer team there were staff from the ARE program as well as members of the USFWS Enforcement Division helping to teach people how to properly bait hooks and cast from the pier. The fishing was not as successful as everyone would have hoped, however everyone had a great time and there were several other attractions set up including the King of Quahogs himself, Jodi King with his amazing quahog recipe already prepared for people to sample free of charge.

The second event was on Wednesday, August 12, 2026. This was an afternoon half-day trip about the Lady Frances with the Frances Fleet out of Narragansett. Approximately 50 participants took the







chartered bus ride down from Providence and had a chance to experience fishing from a head boat. The day was perfect with seasonally warm temperatures, light winds, and calm seas. Despite the relative inexperience of those onboard fishing there were more than the usual number of catches coming over the rail. Perhaps it was a case of beginner's luck, or perhaps credit goes to the many assistants and mates on board, but this particular group of new anglers figured out how to set the hook quickly and numerous fish came on board including scup, fluke, and black sea bass. Many participants were successful with keepers that they took home for dinner. After a successful adventure at sea, we headed back to the pier and said good bye to our friends and newest members of recreational saltwater fishing community.

I want to specially recognize all those who have participated in this program over the years as translators and members of various partnering organizations, many of whom assist with this and other programs every year. Without the help of these amazing people, none of these programs would be possible.

RHODE ISLAND SALTWATER ANGLERS ASSOCIATION
ESTABLISHED 1997

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 a integral part of RI recreational fishing.

OUR SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:

Black Hall Outfitters - Old Lyme & Westbrook, CT

Breachway Bait & Tackle - Charlestown, RI

Fin & Feather - North Kingstown, RI

Frances Fleet - Galilee, RI

Maridee Bait & Tackle - Narragansett, RI

Ocean State Tackle - Providence , RI

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A FEW DAYS IN THE SUN
TRAVEL FISHING

By **Brent Jones**

RISAA does a great job sponsoring fishing trips in Rhode Island on the Francis Fleet out of Point Judith and the Helen H out of Hyannis Port, Massachusetts. If you haven't joined RISAA on one of these trips, I highly suggest you do. They're a lot of fun, we usually take home a few fish, and we always learn something new and hang out with other members.

Recently we tossed around the idea of *travel fishing*. RISAA has members from all over and many of them really get around. Some winter in the South, some vacation and sneak in a little fishing, some have relatives out of state and fish with them, and some travel specifically for fishing. There's a lot of good geographic fishing knowledge scattered across the RISAA membership — and we want to figure out how to use it and maybe cheat a little winter at the same time.

There are several considerations when thinking about travel fishing: What do we want to catch? How far do we go? What boats are available? Who knows the area? Where do we stay? How do we get around? Can we get the fish home without the high cost of flash freezing and shipping?

Rich Hittinger, long-standing member and RISAA First Vice President, took on logistics. Rich had fished Florida before and knew who and where. Just like our raffle charters, there's a trip leader — and that was Rich. Originally four members were traveling, but due to circumstances beyond anyone's control the trip was reduced to three: Rich, RISAA member Mitch Willsie, and me. In the future, maybe we will consider having an alternate just like the raffle charters.

Rich and I flew to Miami. Mitch drove from Rhode Island, visiting a few National Parks along the way, so we had transportation the whole time. Otherwise, we'd have needed a rental car — and that would have limited how much fish we could bring back. Instead, we froze everything and Mitch drove it home in a Yeti on dry ice.

DAY ONE – ISLAMORADA AND THE TAN MAN

Our first boat was the Tan Man <https://www.facebook.com/tanmancharters/> with Captain Matt Davis out of Bud 'N Mary's Marina < https://www.budnmarys.com/> in Islamorada, Florida — about an hour and a half from the Miami Airport and halfway down the Keys. Note there is an article The Fisherman February 2026 (Issue 2, Volume 53) on Islamorada and winter fishing with a lot of good technical detail.

Bud 'N Mary's looks like it's been there since the beginning of time. There was even a photo of Ted Williams catching fish there hanging



RIASS member Mitch Willsie with a dancing channel tarpon.

in our rented house. Perhaps a good omen for New Englanders. The setup was quite convenient: our lodging was a one-minute walk from the boat. With 6:00 a.m. departures, that simplified things. The Tan Man is a well-maintained 1984 Henriques, and Captain Matt has worked on the boat since he was 15, so there weren't many surprises onboard.

With January fishing in South Florida, the fish are picky, so everything starts with live bait. We were on the water before sunrise catching cigar minnows, blue runners, and ballyhoo using very light Sabiki rigs (15 lb. test with 7 lb. test droppers) and cast nets. Other boats that arrived just a little later struggled to get any bait. Some baitfish are so sensitive that even oil on your hands can harm them. So we treated them with a lot of care. All bait went into a large livewell and we used the bait throughout the day.

We started with kite fishing, which for Rich, Mitch, and me was brand new — and very cool. Electric Shimano kite reels and Penn 7500s with 40 lb. test and 50 lb. test fluro leaders. Kites were set to keep baits swimming just below the surface away from the boat. It yielded a couple 25–30 lb. blackfin tuna.

The first tuna took almost half an hour to land. Rich's took about 20 minutes. Great fighting fish. One tuna fed the three of us two

dinners and two lunches. Hard to believe, but by the end of the week we were… slightly tired of tuna.

CHUM IS THE WORD

While anchored, chum was used almost constantly. Frozen seven-pound menhaden blocks were floated behind the boat. Sometimes ground chum was mixed with oats, sometimes sand to make it sink faster. Often, we'd toss a ball of chum covering the hook and cut bait right into the chum slick. Many times, several species were circling the back of the boat — including sharks, who often robbed us.

We ended Day One with tuna, a couple of barracuda, and a half-dozen keeper yellowtail snapper. A solid start. Then it was off to Publix for vegetables, rice, and — obviously — key lime pie.

> *"With January fishing in South Florida, the fish are picky, so everything starts with live bait."*

DAY TWO – WIND, BIRDS, AND SHARKS

Day Two brought five-foot seas and 20-knot winds. Captain Matt always had a Plan A, B, and C. We also had a new problem: birds. Yellow-billed terns stole bait constantly, and frigatebirds stole it from the terns. The goal is to hold bait that tries to dive deep but is kept on the surface with the kite, creating a bit of action. We added small (0.25 oz and 0.5 oz) egg sinkers to get the baits down a little quicker to avoid the birds. We boated one bird – catch and release.

This fishing felt a little like ice fishing: let the fish run, then crank fast to pick up slack. Outriggers and kite lines release with a lot of slack, so very quick retrieval at first matters. They used a thin trip wire wrapped around the reel foot and rod with the bail open so a slight strike popped the line free. Great little trick.

It was also important to get fish out of the "danger zone" fast — before sharks grabbed them. About one out of every ten strikes got chomped. We saw quite a few sharks, hooked a few, but fortunately, none to the boat.

We caught kingfish, a tripletail under a floating pallet, and a nice ceros mackerel. On the way in we stopped at Alligator Reef to try for barracuda. If you've fished with Rich Hittinger and Bob Murry, you know Fritos are used to change fishing luck. Mitch produced Twisted Fritos. It didn't bring up any barracuda, but it did produce a 12-lb mutton snapper. I learned from a salmon fishing guide in New Brunswick to "Never measure your fish. If it's an approximation, it's not a lie…" So maybe the mutton snapper was even a little bigger….



Rich Hittinger, RISAA first vice president with a toothy barracuda.

Dinner was kingfish, rice, and ceros mackerel sushi. Evenings cooking and hanging out were a big part of the trip. I didn't know Mitch or Rich well and sparks a good conversation than better than bad kitchen equipment and good fishing. Regarding eating kingfish, Stephen our captain the next day said, "It's good when you eat it once, but you don't want it every day." He was spot on.

The house Bud 'N Mary's slept six comfortably and had a nice, covered patio — but the kitchen was barely functional: no good pans, no glass baking dishes, no kettle, no running hot water, and a $25 per-day charge if you didn't do the dishes. Our routine became: I cooked vegetables and rice, Rich fried fish, Mitch did dishes. If you plan a trip, you'll want to consider inviting these two.

Also: there was no salt, pepper, ketchup, mustard — nothing. If you go to Islamorada, check with Captain Matt's wife, Lindsay Davis, at Florida Keys Signature Stays <flkeyssignaturestays.com >. Her rentals are much better set up, and she shared a killer conch chowder restaurant recipe I plan to try with quahogs.

(Continued on page 16)



RISAA member Brent Jones with a nice backcountry cobia.

DAY THREE – BACKCOUNTRY

Day Three we fished with Captain Stephen Byrd on a 25-foot Contender with a 300-hp Yamaha and Minn Kota Spot-Lock. We headed to the west and north side of the Keys — the "backcountry." A massive area of shallow water, under a foot deep in many places.

We cruised at 35 mph for bait and then fished for mangrove snapper, jack crevalle, Spanish mackerel, houndfish, puffer fish, lane snapper, blue runners, remora, and even boated a poisonous leatherjacket. Captain Stephen uses the Orvis knot tying the hook to leader, which keeps the tag end aligned with the shank of the hook and picks up fewer weeds.

He ran the boat trimmed up through channels only 18 inches deep. We bumped a couple sharks and saw dolphins in very shallow water. Most of the day was inside Everglades National Park.

Stephen took us to a "no-Google-pins" spot. We hooked several cobia that broke off but landed a 41-inch hog – nice fight, nice fish. To protect the secrecy of his spot, when another boat appeared, we moved — his rule. Then we went outside the park for Spanish mackerel, which were fast, furious, and fun.

Both captains focused on putting us on fish. At first, they baited and handed off rods. Once we proved we could listen and learn, they let us do most tasks ourselves.

Shout-out to Bob Marco, RISAA merchandise manager: the long-sleeve hooded shirts were perfect sun protection for our unconditioned northern skin. Rich and I even hand-washed ours nightly so we'd have one every day.

DAY FOUR – BACK ON THE TAN MAN

Day Four returned to the Tan Man. The regular mate didn't show up, but Matt had a backup within 10 minutes and we were on our way with Lee, an old friend of Matt and a commercial crab fisherman as the mate. We had three different mates over three days — each with different techniques, which meant seeing slightly different approaches. Despite the short delay, we were still first to the bait grounds and loaded up while later boats struggled.

We decided to target sailfish, even though reports were that sail fishing was slow. As usual, we caught what we *weren't* targeting. Mitch picked up a nice blackfin tuna, plus several bonito, until dolphins showed up and shut things down.

It was rainy and rough. All charters were slow. We fished 15 miles out and worked back, landing another tuna and two kingfish, one of them a monster. All charters were slow that day, but if we'd switched to snapper and barracuda we'd have stayed busier, but we'd had plenty of them earlier.

DAY FIVE – WIND AND TARPON

Day Five's wind was forecast to hit 30 knots, so we stayed close with Captain Stephen. We cast live shrimp for tarpon in a small channel. Rich landed one, and Mitch hooked a nice aerial dancer. Big fight, lots of jumps — it's what Mitch was looking forward to the whole trip.

Then we headed what we in Rhode Island would call "out front" to rock piles. We caught strawberry grouper, porgies, and snappers of every color. I hooked what felt like a submarine — running to rocks and locking down. Stephen asked Rich and Mitch to keep their lines out of the water. After a long fight, I finally boated… a grouper about 14 inches long. Not sure what really happened – that dinky fish couldn't have put up that fight, but it was funny, albeit disappointing.

As the weather picked up, we made last casts. I hooked a barracuda on wire, but another barracuda shredded the line above the leader. Several fish came in bleeding from predator attacks. It got rough so headed home with another bucket of snapper.

We closed out the trip with snapper fish tacos stuffed with the remains from the fridge. On our travel day home we stopped in Everglades National Park for a few hours on the way to the airport so Mitch could get on the road and get the fish home.

FINAL THOUGHTS

It was a great trip — sight fishing, casting, drifting, bottom fishing, trolling, and kite fishing. Not many places offer the variety of backcountry and offshore fishing like the Keys. Rich, Mitch, and I learned techniques we'll certainly use back home in Rhode Island.

Organizing a trip like this takes a bit of time - Rich started planning and booking in September for a January trip. We know this place because Rich had been there before. January (particularly early January) is a slow time for charters in South Florida which makes it an ideal time to travel and skip a little bit of winter. If you know of locations like this where there is lodging and several types of fishing, please share them (and maybe invite me…I'll be sure to have salt and pepper).



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RISAA Announces 2026 Scholarship Winners

The RISAA Scholarship Committee is proud to recognize this year's Stephen Medeiros Memorial Scholarship winners as well as the RISAA Foundation scholarship winners. Thanks to the members of the scholarship committee, Gary Lepore, Dominic Ricci, Jan Fimmers, Scott Travers, and Dawn Wood for their thoughtful work and their ongoing commitment to investing in the next generation.

Stephen Medeiros Memorial Member Scholarships

RISAA is committed to supporting the families of our members as they pursue post-secondary education, and each year our Scholarship Committee awards up to ten scholarships of $700 to deserving recipients. This was an exceptionally competitive year, and the Committee was genuinely impressed by the caliber of accomplishments represented in this year's applicant pool.

Luke Lamson

Luke is no stranger to RISAA, as he has been a dedicated member of our organization for many years, volunteering at our Take a Kid Fishing Day and contributing to our annual fishing show. His commitment to this community has not gone unnoticed, and it is no surprise that he earned the title of Junior Angler of the Year not once, but twice — in 2021 and 2022. He also helped his father give a seminar just last month!

What makes him exceptional, however, extends far beyond our waters. As a freshman at Narragansett High School, he claimed the State Long Jump Championship and earned an invitation to national competition. When serious injuries required multiple surgeries and threatened his athletic career, he responded with remarkable resilience — channeling that same discipline into his academics and earning membership in the National Honor Society and recognition at the Rhode Island Debate Tournament.

This recipient coaches youth basketball, tutors students in mathematics through Schoolhouse World, and founded his own landscaping business — demonstrating leadership and initiative that is rare at any age. This scholarship is a reflection of everything he represents — hard work, community, and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

He looks forward to beginning his studies in mechanical engineering in Georgia this fall.

Amanda Lloyd



Amanda's academic, musical, and athletic achievements are, quite simply, extraordinary.

She carries a weighted GPA of 4.4 and ranks 3rd out of 575 students at her school. She has completed AP courses in Calculus BC, Physics II, US History, World History, Language and Composition, Literature, Environmental Science, Macroeconomics, and German — earning 5s on numerous AP exams along the way. Beyond her grades, she was selected for the highly competitive Georgia Governor Honors Program, a four-week collegiate-level academic experience awarded only to the state's most exceptional students.

She has dedicated years to mastery-level musical study. She performs as the first chair with the Gwinnett Symphony Orchestra, the Honors Symphony Orchestra, and the All-state orchestra. An outstanding runner, she is proud to have served as captain of her varsity cross country team and compete as part of their track and field team as well.

Those who know her describe her not just as brilliant, but as someone who shows up — with empathy, patience, and genuine care — for anyone who needs her. She exemplifies everything we admire in a scholarship recipient: academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, and a commitment to lifting others alongside herself.

She will begin her studies in both English and Philosophy at Emory University next fall.

Cathryn McQuesten



Cathryn is of the most active and accomplished students we have ever had the privilege of honoring.

A member of the National Honor Society, she has competed as a sporting clay shooter — earning first place in the junior division — and attended an elite long-range shooting school in Montana, where, despite being the youngest student in the class, she took home the Top Gun award, outperforming students two and three times her age.

Her commitment to conservation and community is extraordinary. As a Girl Scout Ambassador, she earned both the Bronze Award and the Gold Award — the highest honor in scouting — by organizing a women's pheasant hunt to empower women in the outdoor sports community, fundraising over $5,000 so the event was completely free to participants. She has volunteered with the RI Department of Environmental Management, Ducks Unlimited, RI Fish and Wildlife banding birds, the Narragansett Gun Club, Special Olympics, and has even spoken at the State House on behalf of causes she believes in.

Beyond her service, she has run her own egg business since 2014, instructed sailing, and holds multiple jobs simultaneously — all while captaining her school's sailing team.

This fall she will pursue a degree in Wildlife Conservation while minoring in business at the University of Rhode Island.

Madeleine Powell

Madeleine is a young woman whose high school career has been defined by steady growth, intellectual curiosity, and genuine leadership.

She carries a cumulative GPA of 3.3 at a rigorous independent school and has challenged herself with accelerated coursework in mathematics, science, and economics throughout her four years. Her passion for business led her to take both Economics of Business and The Economics of Social Innovation in her junior year, where she was praised for her ability to analyze complex economic concepts and for her creative, collaborative contributions to group work.

What truly sets her apart is her character. This year, her teammates elected her varsity co-captain of the field hockey team — a role she embraced with genuine commitment, mentoring younger players and fostering a positive team culture. Her school counselor describes her as someone who "takes coaching on the field and makes it result in growth" and who has found her voice and confidence in a way that serves as a model to her peers.

She has also worked four years at Westport SeaFarms, developing real-world responsibility and a deep connection to the coastal environment she grew up alongside — the same waters that connect her to this organization through her father, a proud RISAA member.

This fall, she will pursue Business Administration at Ohio Wesleyan University, continuing her field hockey career along the way.

Gillian Prisco



Gillian is a young woman whose creativity, principle, and drive have made a lasting impression on everyone around her.

She has earned a 3.8 unweighted GPA and a 4.0 weighted GPA while taking on AP coursework in Biology, US History, English Literature, and Psychology. She is a proud member of the National Honor Society and brings the same thoughtfulness to her academics that she brings to everything she touches.

She has spent four years in the Jazz Ensemble and Wind Ensemble, served as President of the Gender Sexuality Alliance, and performed invaluable technical volunteer work for her district's elementary and middle school theater programs. She also serves as a youth representative on a church Land Acknowledgement Team, helping the community build meaningful relationships with local Native American tribes.

Her school counselor describes her as someone who "approaches each task at an angle unique to her, and the results are always thoughtful and evocative."

Her connection to RISAA runs deep — her grandparents learned she had been born while out on a night fishing trip on Greenwich Bay, and that love of Rhode Island's waters has never left her.

Her artistic talent and love of teaching have shaped her path — this fall she will pursue a double major in Art Education and Graphic Design at SUNY New Paltz, a fitting choice for someone who believes deeply that art is a form of communication older than language itself.

Stephen Therrien Memorial Scholarship for Fisheries and Marine Sciences

This scholarship was established in 2017 by his wife, Kerry Therrien, in memory of her husband. Ms. Therrien thoughtfully designed this scholarship to provide funding for future generations of marine scientists who share Stephen's dedication to understanding and preserving our fisheries and marine environment.

This is RISAA's most prestigious merit-based award and recognizes students who show outstanding academic achievement and commitment. Therrien Scholars are intellectually curious and have demonstrated passion, experiences, or achievements beyond the usual. They are, in other words, not just top students, they are extraordinary people.

Ryan Bogli



Every year, we look for a student who embodies everything our organization stands for — a love of the water, a commitment to protecting it, and the character to make a real difference in their community. This year's recipient has spent three summers single-handedly maintaining a 2,000-gallon conservation habitat center, diagnosing and treating illnesses in aquatic species under their care, and logging hundreds of hours cleaning up local rivers and volunteering at a fish hatchery.

But this student's story isn't just about marine science. It's about resilience. When their Eagle Scout project — a community recreation space they spent a year planning and fundraising for — was suddenly halted just days before construction, they didn't walk away. Once shy and terrified of public speaking, they stood before a town committee, made their case, and earned approval a month later. They completed the project as their troop's Senior Patrol Leader, guiding twenty volunteers through every step.

A 4.21 GPA. A varsity rower with regional championships. A

future marine biologist who believes protecting our oceans starts with protecting the next generation's chance to know them. Congratulations to this year's Stephen Therrien Memorial Scholar, Ryan Bogli.

Fisheries and Marine Sciences Scholarship Awards

The RISAA Foundation is committed to supporting first year college students as they begin their studies in Marine Sciences and related fields at either the University of Rhode Island or Rodger Williams University through our Fisheries and Marine Sciences Scholarship.

Isabelle Colvin



Some students fall in love with the ocean on a single trip and never look back. Isabelle's journey began on a research vessel out of Groton, Connecticut, where a hands-on fishing and shoreline study trip sparked a passion that never faded. She's now headed to Roger Williams University to double major in Marine Biology and Aquaculture and Aquarium Science, with a dream of becoming an aquarist who rescues and rehabilitates injured marine animals.

But what sets her apart is the word she uses to describe herself: helpful. After growing up with learning disabilities that made school difficult, she turned that struggle into purpose — mentoring peers through a school helper program trained in suicide prevention, and quietly stepping in to keep a beloved drama club's magic alive when its longtime director fell ill. She earned a 4.0 GPA while singing in choir, rowing crew, and leading her band's sections.

She once said her disabilities helped her relate to others on a deeper level. That kind of empathy is exactly what marine conservation needs. Congratulations to our Marine Sciences Scholarship recipient Isabelle Colvin.

Timothy Spooner



Timmy has spent his whole life outdoors — camping, biking, skiing, and fishing his way through New England and beyond. One unforgettable summer, his family's trip to Yellowstone left him inches from a herd of American bison, a memory that deepened his lifelong love for the natural world and the creatures in it.

That love has translated into serious achievement. He's a three-season varsity athlete, captaining his school's cross country and track teams while maintaining a 3.81 GPA and taking on Honors coursework in anatomy and biotechnology. He's worked summers as a surf instructor and turned to the outdoors as a way to manage his own anxiety, describing nature as the place where he finds peace and clarity.

Timmy will be a first year student at the University of Rhode Island where he will pursue Marine Biology, with his sights set on a career protecting Rhode Island's natural environments — whether as a state environmental officer or a field marine biologist. His teacher called him humble, curious, and a natural leader, and said simply: the sky is the limit. Congratulations to our Marine Sciences Scholarship recipient Timothy Spooner.

RISAA Foundation Continuing Education Scholarships

The RISSA Foundation is committed to supporting rising college sophomores as they continue their studies in Marine Sciences at either the University of Rhode Island or Rodger Williams University through our Continuing Education Scholarship.

Louisa Hain



As a child, Louisa could be found digging through sand banks at low tide, discovering whatever creatures the retreating water left behind. That curiosity never left her — she still searches the tide pools every chance she gets.

Now a sophomore at Roger Williams University studying Marine Biology, she's someone who learns best with her hands in the work, and she's built a life around exactly that. She serves as an Aquarium and Aquaculture Research Assistant, caring for fish and invertebrate species and learning the standard procedures that keep them healthy. She also works event operations on campus, all while balancing coursework in biology, chemistry, and oceanography.

Beyond the classroom, she's spent years giving back — helping run a youth-led nonprofit that grows and sells flowers to support food-insecure families, and organizing community meal programs through her church. Her professor praised her persistence, noting she identified it early as the habit of mind she'd need most to succeed, and then lived it out all semester.

She's still finding her exact path forward, but her direction — hands-on, in the field, in the water — has never wavered. Congratulations to our Continuing Education Scholarship recipient, Louisa Hain.

Alessia Johnson



For Alessia, the ocean has never been a backdrop — it's been the center of everything. Growing up in Middletown, Rhode Island, she spent her childhood fishing off Brenton Point with her father and spotting humpback whales near the wind turbines, trips that turned into a lifelong fascination with marine mammals.

Now a sophomore at the University of Rhode Island studying Marine Biology, she's turned that fascination into action. She's worked as a certified surf lifeguard, volunteered as an educator at Save The Bay in Newport, and taught children with special needs to swim through the Special Olympics program. Her professor highlighted a class project where she pitched using crushed shells as a sustainable substrate for eco-friendly concrete — proof that her creativity matches her passion for conservation.

Whether she's snorkeling, boating the Sakonnet River, or casting a line with her family, she remains deeply rooted in the Rhode Island waters that raised her, and committed to protecting the whales, dolphins, and porpoises that share them. Congratulations to our Continuing Education Scholarship recipient, Alessia Johnson.

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RISAA CONTACTS

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

CHARTER TRIPS COMMITTEE
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Heather Low, Chair
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FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE
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FLY FISHING COMMITTEE
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FOUNDATION COMMITTEE
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salera.risaa@gmail.com

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Fred DeFinis
definis@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
Paul Chapman, Chair
risaasurfchair@gmail.com

TAG & RELEASE PROGRAM
Robert Murray, Coordinator
murray@risaa.org • 401-378-5895

TOURNAMENTS COMMITTEE
Dave Leandro, Chair
lurdesiam@hotmail.com

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

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. Therefor, RISAA is proud to be **AFFILIATED** with these respected organizations:

Aquidneck Island Striper Team

Blue Water Anglers

Bowling Green Fishing Club

Buckeye Brook Coalition

Buzzards Bay Fishing Club

Cape Cod Salties Sportfishing Club

CT/RI Coastal Fly Fishers

Connecticut Surfcasters Assoc.

East Greenwich Yacht Club

St. John's Fishing Club

Jamestown Striper Club

Massachusetts Beach Buggy Assoc.

Massachusetts Striped Bass Assoc.

Narragansett Pier Sportfishing Assoc.

Narragansett Salt Water Fishing Club

Narragansett Surfcasters

Newport Cty Salt Water Fishing Club

Northeast Saltwater Fishing Club

Old Colony Amphibians

Pioneer Valley Boat & Surf Club

Plum Island Surfcasters

Princeton Fishing Team

Rhode Island Marine Trades Assoc.

R. I. Mobile Sportfishermen

Hartford Surf Fishing Club

Rhody Fly Rodders

Seaconnet Sportsman's Club

Slater Mill Fishing Club

United Fly Tyers of Rhode Island

Crossroads Anglers Flyfishing Club

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:



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.***

2026 PAC DONORS

PLATINUM ($500+)

Gino DeFeudis

SILVER ($100+)

Captain David Monti
Bill Ogara
Kyle Douton
Garth Fondo
Jack Hutson
Captain David Monti
Bill Ogara

BRONZE ($50+)

Roger Lema

COPPER (UP TO $49)

DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT!

To be effective, we must participate in the system.

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

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED!

Political Action Committee

THANK YOU!

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is cash or check for: ◯ $10 ◯ $25 ◯ $100 ◯ Other $ _____

(Make checks payable to **RISAA PAC**)

Sometimes RISAA acknowledges the names of contributors in our newsletter, do you prefer that:

◯ Please DO NOT Print My Name ◯ It's OK to Print My Name: _____

PLEASE PRINT

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

MAIL TO:
RISAA PAC
P.O. Box 1467
Coventry, RI 02816

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 1467, Coventry, RI 02816
or **REGISTER ONLINE** at www.risaa.org/register to

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

☐ **RENEWAL** MEMBERSHIP ☐ **NEW** MEMBERSHIP

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 ☐ Other _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

☐ **Regular Adult:** $60/year **Adult Multiple Years** (save $5/year): ◯ $100 *(2 yrs)* ◯ $165 *(3 yrs)* ◯ $220 *(4 yrs)*

☐ **Senior (*Age 65+*):** $35/year. Requires date of birth: _____

☐ **Life Member:** $500 (one time, single payment)

☐ **Student (*College/Trade School*):** $35/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 _____

(Membership dues are subject to change, contact RISAA at 401-826-2121 for current pricing)

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY APPLICATION

Enclosed is my check for $ _____ (*Payable to:* RISAA)

To pay by credit card, visit: www.risaa.org/register

MAIL TO:
RISAA
PO BOX 1467
Coventry, RI 02816

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.

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Locally Priced



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401-295-8711 • safesea.com

2026 FOUNDATION DONATIONS

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

PLATINUM ($500+)
Gino DeFeudis
Anthony Gurrera
Rich & Victoria Hittinger *(in memory of Steve Medeiros)*
RI Mobile Sportfisherman *(For Youth Fishing Camp)*

SILVER ($100+)
American Online Giving Foundation
Kenneth Anderson
Andrew Berg
George Badenheimer
Norman Beucher
Joan Bradbury
Curt and Marianne Caserta
Stuart Cohen
Garth Fondo
Dave Helliner
Jack Hutson
Marc Lamson
Jack McMath
No Fluke Fishing LLC
Alvin and Laurie Roulette *(In memory of Francis Mello for youth fish camp)*
Leo Swider
Kyle Terra
Patrick Watson

BRONZE ($50+)
Robert Busenbark
Carl DiRocco
Michael Curran
Thomas Featherston
Timmothy Fleming
Donald Goodroe
Dale Hartman *(for youth fish camp)*
Rich Heffernon
Bill Howard
Vincent Lechmani
Richard Marcinczyk
John Meyer
Joyce and Bob Pacitti *(In memory of Stephen Babigian for youth fish camp)*
John Pope
David Rebello *(for youth fish camp)*
David Ricks
Thomas Saucier
Orlando Savastano *(In memory of Lucas Salem)*
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Alfred Trombley
Judy Wilson

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Charles Murphy
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Ralph Orleck
Stephen Phillips
Stewart Pucci
Rick Rheinberger
Paul Richard
Johni Robert *(In memory of Francis Mello for youth fish camp)*
Jim Salomon
Joseph Silva
William Skoloski
Kenneth Spicer
James Stawarky
Brian Strayer
Douglas Sturgis
Ronnie Tipple
Jane Venditto
Phyllis Vivari *(in memory of John Vivari)*
Daniel Watson
Greg Werner
Susan Winterbottom-Shadday
Jim Zito
Jimi Zito

MAKE A DONATION ONLINE:
WWW.RISAA.ORG/THE-FOUNDATION

Or fill out the form below and mail to the RISA Foundation.

PLEASE PRINT

Any donation over $10 will be sent a receipt that proves your contribution for tax purposes.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to
The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Foundation

THANK YOU!

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is cash or check for: ◯ $5 ◯ $10 ◯ $25 ◯ $50 ◯ $100 ◯ Other $ _____

◯ It's OK to Print My Name ◯ Please DO NOT Print My Name

◯ Donation Made In The Name Of: _____

MAIL TO:
RISA Foundation
P.O. Box 1467
Coventry, RI 02816

RISAA
P.O. BOX 1467
Coventry, RI 02816

CHANGE SERVICE REQUIRED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Providence, RI
Permit No.1899

If You Aren't a Member Already...

JOIN RISAA TODAY!

FIND US ONLINE!

Representing **OVER 7,500** Recreational Anglers

And Over 30 Affiliated Clubs

Conservation · Education · Recreation

- **Informative Monthly Magazine**
- **Monthly Seminars with Expert Speakers**
- **Member-Only Tournaments & Fishing Trips**
- **Discounts at Participating Tackle Shops & Marinas**
- **Family Events & Activities**
- **College Scholarships**



RISAA *Advocates for YOU!*

Marine Conservation
Stephen J. Medeiros Fishing Area at Black Point
Sound Fisheries Management
Legislation such as:
Defining Shore AccessTo 10 Feet Landward of the "Weed Line"& CRMC Reform
And MORE!

Sponsor of

- **NEW ENGLAND SALTWATER FISHING SHOW™**
- **3-Day Youth Fishing Camp**
- **Dam Removal Projects**

RHODE ISLAND
SALTWATER *Anglers*

The Voice of Southern New England Fisherman

RISAA.org
401.826.2121