



The Virginia Saltwater Review

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by

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OVERVIEW

Offshore white marlin action is HOT of the Virginia coast! Boaters are reporting catches in the double digits this week, and a grand slam was reported as well! Inshore, since Earl swept by, the flounder action seems to have slowed. However, hard-working anglers have still managed to find several citation-sized flounder this week around the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and flounder up to 21 inches were hooked at the local piers. Cobia catches continue in several areas throughout the bay, and croaker were reported near Wachapreague, around the middle-bay area, and in the James River. Some of our fall favorites (like spot and speckled trout) are starting to show up in the catches as well, so as the weather cools, get ready to gear up for a great fall fishing season!

****PLEASE NOTE: Due to the staff commitments with the State Fair of Virginia (September 23 through October 3), staff will not publish the Virginia Saltwater Review again until October 8, 2010.****

THE FISHING REPORT

Chincoteague

According to Donna, at Captain Bob's, the flounder throw-back ratio has been pretty high this week (with 25 throwbacks for every keeper). The best catches have been near the tip of the island, in front of Captain Bob's, and in the Assateague Channel. A large flounder (almost 7 pounds) was brought in last Monday from the pier at Inlet View Campground. A few croaker were reported at Buoy 10 and the Assateague Channel. It has been a banner year for crabbing, and large crabs are still being caught everywhere. Winds and rough waves have kept many anglers inshore this week, although a citation wahoo (45 pounds) was brought in from the Washington Canyon. Dolphin, as close as the Parking Lot, were also biting. Black sea bass and flounder were brought in from the wrecks. In the surf, croaker,

spot, a few bluefish, and even kingfish were brought in before the storm. Few have been out since due to strong winds.

Wachapreague

Staff at the Wachapreague Marina reported slow fishing over the past few days. Anglers reported wahoo catches just after the storm passed, but few anglers have gone out lately.

At Captain Zed's Marina, several citations were reported. On the 7th, a white marlin was hooked off of Wachapreague, and two more were reported from the Washington Canyon. Local anglers are catching flounder and croaker in the Wachapreague Inlet and at the mouths of Green and Drawing channels.

Cape Charles

Staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle report that fishing has slowed this week. A few croaker were reported in the Bay, and decent flounder catches were reported before the storm, but little have been spotted since. Black drum and puppy drum (juvenile red drum) were hooked from the local beaches, and one angler even hooked a tarpon from the surf.

Captain Cardone, charter boat captain from Cherrystone, reported a 48-inch release citation red drum. Flounder fishing has also been productive with a few people catching their limits of fish. While the catches have been primarily flounder, there has also been a good bite for red drum.

Lower Bay/Bridge Tunnel

Staff at Cobb's Marina reported that small spot and croaker have been caught in the area, along with flounder and cobia.

Two citations were reported from Salt Pond's Marina this week. The first was a 7-pound, 9-ounce, 26-inch flounder caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the other was a 7-pound, 2-ounce flounder also caught in the Chesapeake Bay with bucktail.

Staff at Carrollton Fishing and Hunting Supply reported that spot are biting really well, especially around Chuckatuck Creek and the Nansemond River (small in size). Cobia have been biting very well throughout the area, and there was a strong croaker bite near the Ghost Fleet.

Ken Neill, of the Peninsula Anglers Club and IGFA representative, contributed the following:

Well Earl did not mess things up. The epic billfish bite remains epic. For some of the best marlin fishing on the planet, get out there now before it is over. Billfish action has been good from the Washington Canyon on down to the Triple Os area. There are plenty of dolphin out there, and wahoo catches are increasing. Tuna fishing has been tough all summer, though a few large yellowfin tuna and a couple of bigeye tuna were caught this week. Sea bass action is very good at the Triangle Wreck. Amberjack are still hanging out at the Southern Towers. Amberjack and crevalle jack can be found at the Chesapeake Light Tower and over nearby wrecks. There are some impressive barracuda in this same area. Cobia are making a good parting show along the oceanfront and around the mouth of the Bay. Sight-casters are finding fish on the buoys and around bait schools in open water. Some large king mackerel have been

seen skying out of the water near the schools of bunker along the oceanfront. Sheepshead action has been pretty good at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Flounder fishing has been very good. It is time to start finding them stacked up along the Baltimore Channel. Spanish mackerel are available in the lower Bay and along the oceanfront. Cape Henry will be good this month. The early spot run is looking good. Speckled trout action is heating up as the water temperatures cool a bit. The Sandbridge red drum run will start soon. Big reds are still being caught around the shoals and by anglers targeting flounder and cobia.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

Although hurricane Earl stirred the waters into a muddy mess, the tremendous early fall fishing action is picking up where it left off as the waters clear. The fall heavy hitters such as spot, speckled trout, and puppy drum will become of more interest as the waters cool. Anglers are also imparting farewells to exiting summer favorites such as flounder, cobia, and red drum as they stage to head out.

Flounder action was very good before Earl but has been slow to recover. Anglers are working hard for their catches, but those using live bait and drifting with cut bait near the third island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel are finding some keeper fish, with a few doormats in the mix. Drifting along the Thimble Shoal and Baltimore Channels are also good places to try right now. Flatties in the 22- to 24-inch range are also available within Lynnhaven in about 20 feet of water this week. Strip baits bounced over the structure works well for wreck flounder.

Cobia are on the move as they prepare to head south, generating outstanding top water action. Before the hurricane, boats were hooking up to as many as a dozen or more fish per day. The best catches are coming from casting live bait and jigs to large pods of cobia swimming on the surface and pairs circling buoys lining the channels heading out of the Bay. Many of these fish are ranging in the 50- to 70-pound class. Bay pier anglers are also getting in on the great top water scene, with a number of cobia landed off several lower Bay and oceanfront piers recently.

Fall speckled trout are starting to present in Lynnhaven Inlet, the Poquoson flats, the seaside of Oyster, and the Elizabeth River. Although most fish are on the smaller side, this action and the size of the fish will only improve as the waters cool. A few puppy drum are available to those casting jigs or offering fresh bait within Lynnhaven or Rudee inlets. The Elizabeth River is also producing pups lately. Big red drum will continue to delight anglers on the lower Bay shoals and near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, while surf and pier casters are especially interested in the prospect as they await the run off Sandbridge.

Droves of decent-sized spot are showing along the oceanfront and the lower Bay shorelines, rivers, and inlets. The Hampton Bar and Ocean View areas are producing nice spot on blood worms. Yellowbellies are also available within both Lynnhaven and Rudee inlets on a moving tide. Local-fishing pier anglers are taking advantage of the first spot run, with content anglers toting away coolers full of spot ranging to around ½ pound.

The folks at the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier are reporting catches of nice pompano and horse croaker weighing almost 2 pounds this week. Medium-sized hardheads are all over the lower

Bay and along the Virginia Beach shorelines, but the run of big hardheads out of Oyster slowed after the storm.

Sheepshead are still taking late-season offerings along the entire span of the Bay Bridge Tunnel. Lots of hungry triggerfish are in the same vicinity. Spadefish ranging around 3 to 4 pounds are still around the 3rd and 4th islands, although this action has slowed.

Spanish mackerel are zipping through tide rips near the Bridge Tunnel, along Cape Henry, and along the buoy lines at the mouth of the Bay, where 20-inch fish are the average size lately. Schools of false albacore are moving in closer to the beach, which can be sporting on light tackle.

Big amberjack are still swarming around offshore wrecks, the South Tower, and the Chesapeake Light Tower. Crevalle jack could be a nice consolation prize. Deep-dropping for blueline and golden tilefish is still a good choice.

Offshore billfish action resumed to off-the-charts intensity after the hurricane passed this week. Boats are reporting dozens of releases for mostly white marlin. Several sailfish, spearfish, and blue marlin are also visiting trolled spreads. A true grand slam was reported this week when a crew released 18 white marlin, a blue marlin, and an Atlantic spearfish. Dolphin action is good, with many gaffers over 30 pounds hitting the docks. Nice wahoo are also becoming more common in 50 to 100 fathoms.

Virginia Middle Bay

Johnny, with Jett's Hardware, reports that large red drum are being caught in deeper water while smaller ones are in the shallows. A few large Spanish mackerel are being caught, but there are plenty of small bluefish to go around. Small spot are available as bait for the striped bass being caught further north.

Dan, with Smith's Point Marina, reports striped bass are being caught in Maryland waters. Flounder can be found around the light and Wiccomico River mouth. Spanish mackerel and bluefish are being caught by trollers, and puppy drum (juvenile red drum) are still around as well.

Butch, with Garrett's Marina, reports the action has been a bit slow with some spot being caught around the Urbanna area. Croaker are probably still around as well, but not many anglers have been going out for them.

Virginia Beach

According to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center, the white marlin bite has been excellent recently! Double digits of marlin catches—up to 18 per day—were reported! Anglers have seen spearfish and blue marlin as well. Last week, a grand slam was reported (three species in 1 day), along with yellowfin tuna and dolphin catches. Inshore, cobia fishing has been doing incredibly well, as even surf fishermen were hooking them. Headboats have had success with catch-and-release black sea bass, flounder, and croaker. Keeper-sized flounder have been hooked, and numerous bluefish were reported.

Local anglers are beginning to gear up for striper season in October.

Paula, from Fisherman's Wharf Marina, reported really great white marlin fishing both before and after the storm (possibly better after the storm). As many as 25 fish per day have been reported. The Norfolk Canyon has produced white marlin as well as wahoo and bigeye tuna. Cobia fishing remains really great inshore.

Virginia Piers

Anglers at the Ocean View Pier were catching spot, croaker, and flounder this week.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, spot were biting on and off over the past few days (the weekend was really good). Striped bass and a citation-sized pompano were also reported.

Good fishing was reported from the Buckroe Pier this week. Nice flounder (the largest was 6.4 pounds and 26 inches) were reported with many in the 20- to 21-inch range. Numerous large croaker (17-18 inches) and bluefish (up to 20 inches) were caught, along with puffers and pan-sized white perch. A few sharks have been caught at night as well.

Outer Banks, NC

Offshore fishing out of Oregon Inlet has slowed down some from last week. Anglers hooked dolphin, wahoo, tuna, and amberjack but were having a harder time getting their limits. Billfishing also slowed down, but all three species were available. Eight to ten miles offshore, king mackerel, red drum, cobia, and striped bass were caught. Bottom fishing was producing sea bass, triggerfish, snapper, grouper, and blackbelly rosefish. Close to shore, boat, pier, and surf fishermen reported Spanish mackerel, bluefish, spot, croaker, pompano, and sea mullet. Inside the inlet, speckled trout were being caught in the early morning and late afternoon. Flounder catches were mostly undersized, and legal-sized striped bass were around the bridges.

South of Oregon Inlet, the fishing was a bit slow. Bluefish were at the point along with a few red drum. Sea mullet could be caught on the north and south beaches. Spanish mackerel and bluefish were at the point jetties as well.

Offshore fishing out of Hatteras Inlet was good for blackfin tuna and dolphin. Sailfish were available for the people chasing billfish. Inshore fishing saw red drum, speckled trout, and bluefish.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

THE VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION











***WANTS YOUR FISH....
TO MEASURE AND AGE.***

You catch it, you fillet it,

**but instead of throwing the remains in the trash,
please donate them to science.**

The Marine Sportfish Collection Project will focus on species of fish that are difficult to collect through the agency's normal sampling program. Anglers are asked to donate their filleted carcasses (head and tail intact) of legal and fresh-caught:



COBIA	SHEEPSHEAD	RED DRUM	BLACK DRUM	TAUTOG
				
KING MACKEREL	SPANISH MACKEREL	TILEFISH (BLUELINE OR GOLDEN)	WRECKFISH, SNOWY GROUPEL, WARSAW GROUPEL	BLUEFISH (GREATER THAN 16 POUNDS OR 36 INCHES)
				

In return for participating in the project, the agency will provide a ONE FREE PROJECT TEE SHIRT, HAT, BOAT WHISTLE OR MEASURING TAPE FOR EACH PARTICIPANT, PER MONTH of the DONATION.

Please visit these bait and tackle merchants to participate:

- Chris' Bait and Tackle (Capeville)
- Long Bay Pointe Marina (Virginia Beach)
- Wallace's Bait and Tackle (Hampton)
- Buckroe Fishing Pier (Hampton)
- Virginia Beach Fishing Center (Virginia Beach)



The Virginia Marine Resources Commission
And

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science

***WANT YOUR FLOUNDER...
TO MEASURE AND AGE.***

You catch it, you fillet it,

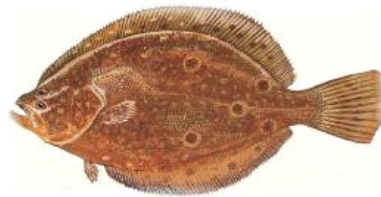
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VMRC is working in cooperation with the VIMS to collect data on the harvest of recreational summer flounder. The goal of this project is to investigate the life history of male and female summer flounder within the recreational fishery along the Atlantic Coast.

Anglers are asked to donate their filleted carcasses (head and tail intact) of legal-sized (18.5 inches and above) and fresh-caught summer flounder to the Marine Sportfish Collection Project.



In return for participating in the project, the agency will provide a ONE FREE PROJECT TEE SHIRT, HAT, BOAT WHISTLE OR MEASURING TAPE FOR EACH PARTICIPANT, PER MONTH of the DONATION.

Please visit these merchants to participate and look for FLOUNDER ONLY collection kits within each project freezer:

Chris' Bait and Tackle (Capeville)

Long Bay Pointe Marina (Virginia Beach)

Wallace's Bait and Tackle (Hampton)

Buckroe Fishing Pier (Hampton)

Virginia Beach Fishing Center (Virginia Beach)

Rudee Inlet Station Marina (Virginia Beach)



Updated July 13, 2010

National Saltwater Angler Registry



New Law In

2010

ATTENTION Virginia Saltwater Fishermen



**Before You Drop
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**Under a new Federal law,
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saltwater fisherman must
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