



Fishing Post - March 2009

Atlanta Saltwater Sportsman's Club

www.aswsc.org

2009 is Taking Shape!

Tournaments - West Palm Beach was a blast as always. And the remaining 2009 Tournament Schedule includes some exciting new additions. Aside from traditional favorite tournaments (Destin, Apalachicola, Orange Beach, Pensacola), there is an April cobia-targeted tournament in Destin and an August Outer Banks trip in NC. Be sure to review the tournament schedule on the club website and make your plans to attend as many as possible - this looks to be a super year!

Social Events - one of the most exciting things happening to the club this year is the Social Events schedule. The new Social Committee (under the direction of Libby Guntner) has scheduled more than a dozen club events for 2009. While all of the locations/details have not yet been finalized, events include several Happy Hour get-togethers, Club Picnic, Chili-CookOff, and a Halloween Party - as well as several events scheduled during tournaments. There is some type of event scheduled for every remaining month this year!



The first couple of events have been a big success with 15 - 18 members attending each. Many Thanks to Libby and all of the Social Committee members for a *Job Well Done*. (also see *Letter From Libby* on Pg 2)

Club Meetings - The 2009 Club Meetings got off to a great start with an outstanding guest speaker for the February meeting: Captain Judy of Miss Judy Charters. Capt Judy gave members a lot of information on various topics and fielded a lot of questions. In March, Matt Condon of Signature Shares told us about an exciting new (less expensive) way to participate in high-quality boating. A new idea introduced for 2009 is the \$5 raffle, which provides an opportunity to win a premium prize. Two nice rod/reel combos have been won thus far.

Information about all upcoming club activities is available on the website (see *Calendar* page, *Tournaments* page, and *Social Events* page). Keep checking the website for further details and information when available.

New Format Tournament Planned for April

Responding to member input, the ASWSC Tournament Committee has planned a tournament to target the annual cobia run in the Florida panhandle. The tournament will take place in Destin on April 16 - 18. Details and application are available on the website. Although the final scoring system isn't finalized just yet, the concept is to award more tournament points for cobia than for other species, effectively targeting cobia. In order to ensure t-shirts, the sign-up deadline is April 1st. Aside from the exciting new format, Destin is one of the most popular club destinations. This is not one to miss, so get busy!

Take the Quiz!

Think you're proficient with Florida saltwater fishing regulations? Test your knowledge by taking the quiz on pages 4-5. Many Thanks to GAFF Magazine (www.gafflife.com) and author Ross Burnaman for giving us permission to reprint this interesting article.

(Quiz on Pages 4 - 5 / Answers on Page 11)

Letter From Libby

March 2009

ASWSC 2009 Social Committee

Greetings All,

Your 2009 Social Committee met in early February and planned out a host of fun events for the club this year. To view a complete list of activities, please visit the club website.

Our first Happy Hour of the year took place on Sunday, February 22nd at Cheeseburger in Paradise, located in the Perimeter Mall area. We had about 15 club members attend on that cold Sunday afternoon. It was pretty neat to sit with all our “water” buddies, drink cocktails of choice amidst the palm trees with our beloved Jimmy Buffet music playing in the background. Needless to say, a fun time was had by all. And, I’m sure this will come as a surprise, Steve and I were the last ones to leave (along with Dawn)!

Our second happy hour was Saturday, March 21st directly after the Swap Meet. This time we were at Pappasito’s in Marietta since the Swap Meet was held at Hal Bayless’ warehouse. We had about 18 club members join us for a fabulous fiesta afternoon. The margaritas were almost as big as the “fish that got away” stories being told.

On April 1st (no foolin’) we’ll move to Tucker/Stone Mountain where we’ll be Happy for an Hour or so at Sangria’s Tex Mex Café. The address/etc is located on the website and a flyer will be emailed to you as a reminder prior to the event.

As you are probably catching on...we’re trying to move the Happy Hours around the city so we can be in your “neck of the woods” at least once or twice this year. We also have some great events planned outside of the Happy Hours...a Crawfish Boil complete with a “Nascraw” race (you’ve not been to a race until you see the crawfish race on their own customized track sponsored by Team Doolittle!). There’s a River Float planned in August where we’ll float down the river on inner-tubes and end up at Galen Forbes’ home for a cookout...can’t forget that Low Country Boil scheduled Labor Day Weekend at our “friends in low places house”, John and Pat Williams...that’s just a sampling of things to come.

A huge thanks to my all volunteer committee members listed below...without them, the beer would not have flowed as freely at our organizational meeting and I don’t think you’d have as many fun events to attend this year!

Look forward to seeing each of you at Sangria’s Tex Mex Café on April 1st!

Yours in Fun!
Libby Guntner

Committee Members:

Judy Kump

Galen Forbes

Elizabeth Bakos

Dawn Brady

Kim Fritz

John and Pat Williams

Angela Doolittle

Honorary Members (just in it for the fun committee meetings):

Steve Guntner

Randy Fetzer

Steve Fritz

Mike Springer

Doug Doolittle

Capn’ Philby

News Bites



Club Forum Moves to Website

Another step forward was made to consolidate club activities through the recently renovated website. The club forum (formerly administrated through Yahoo Groups) was integrated into the club website. The forum is a great way to communicate with other members and keep up on current events (captains can find crew; anglers can hook up to share expenses; get answers to fishing/boating questions; share resources and tips; get advice about solving problems - the possibilities are endless). But the forum only works if we use it. If you haven't signed up for the forum already, visit the website and follow the simple instructions. Support the forum while it grows and it will eventually be a valuable tool for you.

Capt Judy's Free Weekly Fishing Reports

If you would like to receive the weekly fishing reports from Miss Judy Charters, just drop Capt Judy a line and let her know. Also, she is always looking for individual fishing reports and stories.

email: fishjudy2@aol.com

That Time of Year Again...

Make sure your fishing licenses and boat registrations are up to date. And don't forget to renew HMS/Tuna Permits. Permits purchased now are valid through 12/31/2009 and can be obtained online at:

<https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/initialapp.asp>

Share Your Knowledge

One of the great benefits of our club is the opportunity to become better anglers by pooling our knowledge. We need volunteers to man a 20-minute "How To" table during one of the upcoming club meetings. This can be about any fishing or boating related topic. You don't need props or a fancy presentation - and you don't need to be an expert. Just be willing to spend a few minutes sharing information with your fellow club members.

To volunteer, contact Scott Rowe or Tom Adrien. Or email to: info@aswsc.org

Something Missing?

We welcome your input, photos, news items, and suggestions about the content of the ASWSC *Fishing Post* Newsletters.

Forward your information or digital photos to: info@aswsc.org

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW FLORIDA'S SALTWATER FISHING LAWS?

By Ross Burnaman

(*article provided courtesy of GAFF Magazine: www.gafflife.com)*

Ignorance is bliss, at least until you are checked by Officer Friendly and issued a citation for a fishing violation. As an avid angler and former lawyer for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC), I used to think I knew Florida's saltwater fishing regulations. That all changed after I began writing a book on the subject.

Since my book was published in late 2007, many laws have changed, some of which I have written about in previous GAFF columns. I am now in the process of publishing a new, improved book about Florida's maze of saltwater fishing laws and regulations. Look for updates in GAFF. (Note: this test is for rules in effect as of November 4, 2008.)

1. FWCC has seasonal restrictions on tarpon fishing in Boca Grande Pass.

True_____ False_____

2. You can legally target and harvest red drum (redfish) using a cast net.

True_____ False_____

3. A fisherman took his vegan 18-year-old son for a ride on his skiff in Florida Bay. Not only did the son not eat fish, he refused to support the sport in any way, because he didn't want to "hurt" the fish. Always at the ready for a nice fight, however, Dad took along one rod, a small tackle box and the cooler. Seeing a frenzy of diving birds, Dad tossed a spoon and caught a 15-inch Spanish mackerel and put it in the cooler. Soon, a FWCC officer pulled up for a routine check. After admiring the nice fish, the officer asked for their fishing licenses. Dad produced a valid license and picture identification. However, the boy proudly proclaimed that he would never buy a fishing license since some of the money was used to promote fishing. The officer legally issued a citation to Dad for his son's lack of a Florida saltwater fishing license.

True_____ False_____

4. A 21-year-old Floridian who serves in the United States Air Force stationed at Eglin Air Force Base is home on leave from Iraq for 29 days. In order to legally fish from a vessel in Choctawhatchee Bay, he needs a valid Florida fishing license.

True_____ False_____

5. Whether an otherwise non-exempt angler needs a Florida saltwater fishing license or a Florida freshwater fishing license, depends upon whether saltwater or freshwater species of fish are in the boat's cooler.

True_____ False_____

6. In Florida, you can legally gaff a pompano to harvest it.

True_____ False_____

7. A properly licensed recreational angler can legally harvest up to 100-pounds of sand trout in a single day from Florida waters.

True_____ False_____

8. You could legally use a landing net/dip net to bring a 32-inch snook on-board your vessel in Martin County on November 4, 2008.

True_____ False_____

(continued next page)

9. You caught a six-foot long wahoo while fishing in Florida waters, but your cooler is only three-feet long. You can legally cut the fish in half, put both halves in your cooler and bring it ashore.

True_____ False_____

10. You can legally target and harvest a bonefish by snatch-hooking (snagging) it in Florida waters.

True_____ False_____

11. A FWCC "saltwater products license" or SPL is only available to commercial anglers.

True_____ False_____

12. You can legally harvest flounder anywhere in Florida using a gig, but only if the gig has three prongs or less.

True_____ False_____

13. All species of mullet are subject to seasonal limits on the number of mullet that can be onboard a recreational vessel in Florida waters.

True_____ False_____

14. Florida's daily bag limit is one shark per person per day. Three properly licensed recreational anglers are onboard a properly licensed vessel in State waters. The possession limit for the vessel is two sharks.

True_____ False_____

15. The daily recreational bag limit for Southern stingray is 100-pounds per person or two stingrays, whichever is greater.

True_____ False_____

16. A properly licensed recreational angler can deploy an unlimited number of pinfish traps in State waters.

True_____ False_____

17. The daily recreational bag limit for Nassau grouper is one per person per day in Florida.

True_____ False_____

18. It is legal for a recreational angler in Florida to use a "bandit" with ten treble hooks attached to the fishing line, as long as reef fish are not targeted in the Gulf of Mexico.

True_____ False_____

19. Two properly licensed recreational anglers are fishing for black sea bass eight nautical miles west of Crystal River. The water is only about twenty-feet deep. They are required to have a fish venting tool onboard the vessel.

True_____ False_____

20. The redfish (red drum) fishing has been excellent. Each day during one lucky week, you walk to your dock and catch one legal slot-size red, fillet it, and put the filets in your home freezer for storage. You are in violation of FWCC's recreational possession limit for redfish.

True_____ False_____

Sustainable fisheries depend upon ethical angling. In theory, if we obey the fishing rules, then our children's children will still be able to enjoy the thrill of sight-casting to a tailing redfish, jumping a tarpon, eating a fresh grouper sandwich, and, well, you get the picture.

I hope you will take the time to [take the test and check your answers on the following page]. I suspect you will agree with me that Florida's fishing rules are not so simple.

-- Ross Burnaman

(answers on page 11)

Off The Hook

This is the transcript of an actual radio conversation between a US naval ship and Canadian authorities off the coast of Newfoundland in October 1995:

US Ship: Please divert your course 0.5 degrees to the south to avoid a collision.

CND reply: Recommend you divert your course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision.

US Ship: This is the Captain of a US Navy Ship. I say again, divert your course.

CND reply: No. I say again, you divert YOUR course.

US Ship: THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS CORAL SEA, WE ARE A LARGE WARSHIP OF THE US NAVY. DIVERT YOUR COURSE NOW!!

CND reply: This is a lighthouse. Your call.

An Amish boy and his father were visiting a mall. They were amazed by almost everything they saw, but especially by two shiny, silver walls that could move apart and then slide back together again. The boy asked, "What is this, Father?" The father (never having seen an elevator) responded, "Son, I have never seen anything like this in my life, I don't know what it is." While the boy and his father were watching with amazement, a fat old lady in a wheel chair rolled up to the moving walls and pressed a button. The walls opened and the lady rolled between them into a small room. The walls closed and the boy and his father watched the small circular numbers above the walls light up sequentially. They continued to watch until it reached the last number and then the numbers began to light in the reverse order. Finally the walls opened up again and a gorgeous, voluptuous 24-year-old blonde woman stepped out. The father, not taking his eyes off the young woman, said quietly to his son ... "Go get your mother."

Three lawyers and three engineers are traveling by train to a conference. At the station, the three lawyers each buy tickets and watch as the three engineers buy only a single ticket.

"How are three people going to travel on only one ticket?" asked one of the three lawyers.

"Watch and you'll see," answers one of the engineers.

They all board the train. The lawyers take their respective seats but all three engineers cram into a restroom and close the door behind them. Shortly after the train as departed, the conductor comes around collecting tickets. He knocks on the restroom door and says, "Ticket, please." The door opens just a crack and a single arm emerges with a ticket in hand. The conductor takes it and moves on.

The lawyers saw this and agreed it was quite a clever idea. So after the conference, the lawyers decide to copy the engineers on the return trip and save some money. When they get to the station, they buy a single ticket for the return trip. To their astonishment, the engineers don't buy a ticket at all.

"How are you going to travel without a ticket," asks one perplexed lawyer.

"Watch and you'll see," says one of the engineers.

When they board the train the three lawyers cram into a restroom and the three engineers cram into another one nearby. The train departs. Shortly afterward, one of the engineers leaves his restroom and walks over to the restroom where the lawyers are hiding. He knocks on the door and says, "Ticket, please."

From the Helm to the Cockpit

For all the fishers that read this, maybe someone has a brilliant idea of how make it easy to develop a system of sharing information: captains wanting crew, crew to share expense on a vessel, accommodations, transportation, and the like. We need a better mousetrap; just get back to us when the light bulb comes on.

Doesn't it seem like the fishing season starts calling immediately after that last tournament in October? The few trips during what is considered "off season" just don't seem to satisfy the "fishing itch" until that first trip in April. Well, it's here, all the preparation is in process - the gear, the boat, the tactical planning, has all started. Buckle up for what appears to be a great year for ASWSC and make sure your shoes are tied on tight.

Let's go Catch-em Up.

Tight Lines,
Scott Rowe
Atlanta Saltwater Sportsman's Club
2008-2009 President

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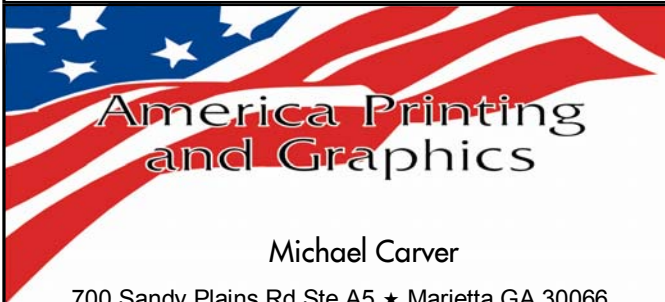


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CONSERVATION NEWS

News broke in several publications recently about the USA being the world's largest importer of billfish for food - and for use in many other products. Despite tremendous efforts by government and conservation organizations to protect billfish from (the evils of) recreational fishing, American consumers continue to encourage the slaughter of marine resources by purchasing billfish. Make your voice heard on this issue by supporting a ban on the import of all billfish - and boycott companies which use billfish in their products. For more information on how to discourage the sale of billfish for human consumption, visit the website supported by the IGFA, The Billfish Foundation, and the National Coalition for Marine Conservation:

<http://www.takemarlinoffthemenue.org/home>

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council requested an interim 180-186 day complete closure of the red snapper fishery which, if approved, would likely take effect in June or July. The South Atlantic region does not include the Gulf of Mexico; however, it does include federal waters off the Atlantic coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. (This will potentially apply to the club's Outer Banks tournament in August.) Is there no end to the insanity? Article:

<http://www.safmc.net/News/NewsReleases/NewsReleaseMarch92009/tabid/606/Default.aspx>

Yet another recent study disputes the science behind federal snapper legislation:

http://www.joinrfa.org/Press/RedSnapperRelease_030409.pdf

For more information on FL saltwater fishing: http://myfwc.com/RECREATION/Saltwater_index.htm

For information on Federal Gulf of Mexico fishing regulations: www.gulfcouncil.org/

CONSERVATION SUPPORTERS



Protecting the interests of saltwater anglers and working to sustain our nation's fisheries.

www.joinrfa.org



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www.billfish.org

Coastal Conservation Association



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www.ccaga.org



If you're not already a member, you should be! visit www.igfa.org for more information

The International Game Fish Association is a not-for-profit organization committed to the conservation of game fish and the promotion of responsible, ethical angling practices through science, education, rule making and record keeping.

Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation



The Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation funds inspired scientific research and innovative educational programs to encourage conservation and best management practices for sustainable marine environments.

www.guyharveyoceanfoundation.org

Get Involved!

It's up to anglers like us to preserve the future of sportfishing!

RULES ARE MEANT TO BE BROKEN IF ONLY THEY CAN BE UNDERSTOOD
(answers to quiz questions)

If everybody does the right thing, then society does not create a rule to say what the wrong thing is, since it is a non-issue. Hence, the adage "rules are meant to be broken." When it comes to saltwater fishing in Florida waters, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) apparently recognizes that anglers don't always do the right thing and has therefore created a myriad of rules. Problem is, many anglers don't know what the rules are.

1. **True.** In 2004, FWCC established a limit of 3 active lines per vessel during April, May and June as part of the tarpon rules in Chapter 68B-32, FAC. The rule was later repealed and the FAC does not include former Rule 68B-32.005. But, FWCC's gear rule chapter has seasonal restrictions on tarpon fishing in Boca Grande Pass during April, May and June, where a maximum of three lines may be deployed from any vessel at any one time, and use of breakaway gear is prohibited. Rule 68B-4.018, FAC.
2. **True.** Rule 68B-22.006, FAC.
3. **True.** Sonny was not exempt from having a license since he was aboard a vessel with fishing gear. Spanish mackerel is subject to the special restriction that makes the operator liable for all on-board violations. Rule 68B-23.006(2), FAC. Dad is liable for his Son's violation.
4. **True.** If he were on leave for 30 days or more, then he would be exempt if he has his orders. §379.353(2)(c), F. S. In my opinion, all soldiers on leave from overseas duty should be entitled to free fishing.
5. **False.** Although FWCC might try to use the "cooler test," it is the salinity of the water that matters, except in a few particular places. §§379.101(17) & (33), F.S. One such example is the St. Marks River (Wakulla County), where the Legislature passed a special law to set the saltwater boundary at the confluence of the Wakulla River.
6. **False.** Rule 68B-35.004(2), FAC.
7. **True.** Since sand trout is not specifically regulated, the general statutory presumption of non-commercial harvest applies. §373.361(2)(i), F.S. Bear in mind, a recreational angler cannot sell or trade fish, and cannot use "food fish" such as trout as fertilizer. Rule 68B-4.0083(1), FAC.
8. **False.** Only hook and line gear may be used to harvest snook on Florida waters and nets are specifically prohibited. Rule 68B-21.007, FAC.
9. **False.** Wahoo must be landed in whole condition. Rule 68B-41.003(3), FAC. You can only remove the guts and the gills. Either return to port or immediately release that big wahoo.
10. **True.** Rule 68B-34003(4), FAC allows use of hook and line gear, but does not prohibit snatch hooking. But, good luck sight casting to a tailing bonefish on the flats, and instead of presenting the fly or bait, attempting the snag. Not a recommended practice, to say the least.
11. **False.** This is a thorny area of the law and FWCC considers a SPL to be a commercial license. But the statutes clearly require a SPL for use of certain gear (such as non-resident use of certain nets) or for harvest of "commercial quantities." §§379.361(2)(a), (2)(i), (3), F.S.
12. **False.** This was a trick question. Gigging flounder is perfectly legal, but the restriction on the number of prongs only applies in the inland salt waters of Volusia County where legal sized flounder may be taken "by means of a barbed spear, with not more than three (3) prongs." Rules 68B-48.004(2) & 68B-3.008(3)(a), FAC.
13. **True.** But the places, times and amounts vary widely. Rule 68B-39.004, 68B-39.0045, 68B-39.0046 FAC.
14. **True.** There is a two shark per vessel maximum possession limit. Rule 68B-44.003(1), FAC.
15. **True.** Since there are no specific bag limits then the default for "commercial quantities" applies unless the angler has a SPL. §379.361(2)(i), F.S.
16. **True.** Rule 68B-4.020(1)(f), FAC, does not appear to limit the number of pinfish traps that can be deployed.
17. **False.** Harvest or possession of Nassau grouper is prohibited. Rule 68B-14.0036(2)(g), FAC.
18. **True.** Rule 68B-4.002(5), FAC. defines "hook and line gear" to include ten (10) or fewer hooks attached to any handline, rod, reel, or any pole...." A bandit would appear to be a type of reel or handline.
19. **True.**
20. **True.** Redfish is one of the few species with a possession limit not tied to a specific type of location. Rule 68B-22.005(1), FAC.

Reasonable people (and lawyers too) might differ on whether my answers are correct or not. If you strongly disagree, write to GAFF and show me the error of my thinking. I'm sure we can all agree that FWCC's rules are not easily understood and too often changed. One of the benefits of subscribing to GAFF is to stay informed of fishing rule changes. Also, stay tuned for information on my upcoming book on saltwater fishing regulations.

-- Ross Burnaman

Upcoming Events, Reminders and Deadlines

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, April 14th / 7PM

Winfield Hall - 3890 Satellite Blvd, Duluth, GA - 770.495.8088

UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS:

Wednesday, 6pm, April 1st: Happy Hour at Sangria's Tex Mex

Saturday, 2pm, May 2nd: Crawfish Boil at Steve/Libby Guntner's

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS:

Destin "Ling Fling" Cobia Tournament - April 16 - 18

(see website for details and application)

Apalachicola Hard Bottom Classic - May 14 - 16

(see website for details and application)

IMPORTANT: Room space is limited for these tournaments, so make your reservations asap.

Website Poll Results

The last website poll asked visitors, "What is your favorite fish to catch?" The answers:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Dolphin - 15% | 6) Seatrout & Amberjack - tied at 6% each |
| 2) Wahoo - 14% | 7) Mackerel - 4.5% |
| 3) Billfish - 12% | 8) Snapper - 3% |
| 4) Tuna - 11% | 9) Other - 1.5% |
| 5) Grouper / Redfish / Cobia - tied at 9% each | |

Current Poll: *What is your favorite method of fishing?*

(Trolling, Casting, Bottom-fishing, Jigging, Fly-fishing, Drift-fishing, Kite-fishing, Bobber/Balloon, Other)

Something Missing?

We welcome your input, photos, news items, and suggestions about the content of the ASWSC Fishing Post Newsletters. Forward your information or digital photos to: info@aswsc.org

ARE YOU IN THE LOOP? If you are not getting emails from the club, please be sure to send your current email address to info@aswsc.org. We'll add you to the mailing list so you can receive the latest information as quickly as possible. Don't forget to list us a SAFE sender to avoid SPAM problems.

For latest club information check out www.aswsc.org