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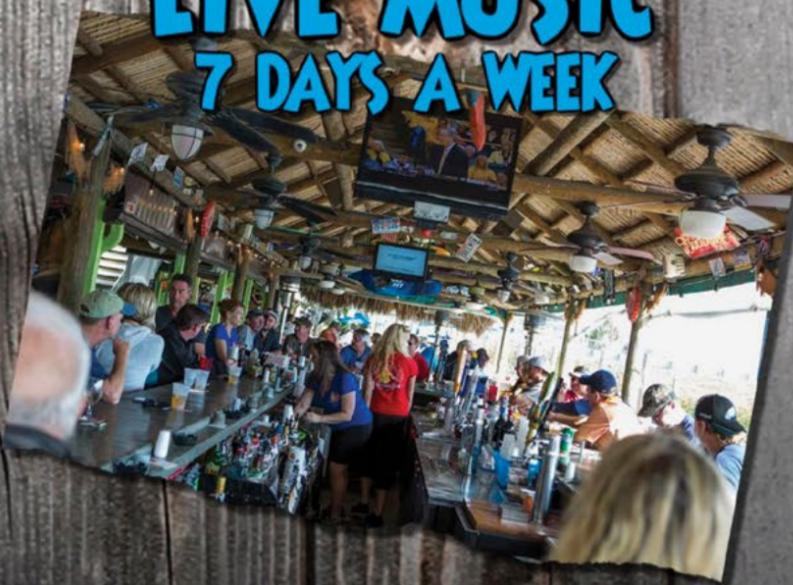
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FISHING VS GOLF

If you are reading this, you probably already agree with me that Fishing is a far more worthwhile pastime than Golf. There might be a couple readers out there who would disagree with me, but I bet there aren't many.

There are so many obvious reasons why fishing is better than golf that I can't begin to address them all, so I will try to deal only with the top 5 reasons...

#1 – I know that many busy people use a round of golf to conduct some business in a more relaxed setting where adult beverages are allowed. Fishing also provides such a setting, with the additional benefit that your customer or prospective customer cannot wander off, so you are guaranteed their undivided attention and that, in a worst-case scenario, they are completely dependent on you to bring them back to the dock alive Kind of no deal, no dock.

#2 – Golf involves chasing a silly little white ball with dimples around in a bunch of grassy fields and whacking it with a very expensive stick, over and over again. I'm really not sure why they hate that little ball so much. Fishing involves chasing a variety of different fish with very expensive sticks, while trying to get them to eat a bait. In golf, the end result is adding up a score (involving complex and sometimes creative math) to determine a winner. This winner gets bragging rights and sometimes a little money. In fishing, the end result is catching tasty fish that you get to take home for dinner, as well as getting bragging rights centering around who caught the biggest and most edible fish. Sometimes there can even be money involved in fishing as well. Ultimately no one eats golf balls so this one is a big win for fishing!

#3 – I have always found that I am relatively good at fishing, not so much at golf. Fishing requires the patience to sit quietly in a nice comfortable boat while waiting for the fish to bite. Often this waiting process is enhanced by the judicious use of adult beverages. Golf involves hiking around in the grass while chasing and whacking a tiny white ball. Golf courses are often many acres and distances can be substantial. Golf carts do make this situation better, but the whole thing just seems like a lot of effort just to get away from the wife or office and drink beer. When I reached my 40's, many of my friends took up golf and encouraged me to join them on these excursions. Ultimately, I determined that I already had a long list of things in my life that I was not very good at and I really did not see the need to add more to that list.

#4 – People tell me that getting out on the golf course is good exercise, however I would argue that fishing is actually much better exercise than golf. In golf, all that you pick up is the tiny white ball or the very expensive sticks. On a recent fishing trip, I did battle with a 200 to 300 pound goliath grouper and a 60 to 80 pound cobia. Both of these provided the best workout that I have had for some time.

#5 – Some golfers talk about getting out in the open air and seeing lots of nice natural things like birds, squirrels, gophers, turtles and (in Florida) alligators. This is all fine, if you like rats with fuzzy tails and things that will bite your arms or legs off, but fishing exposes you to the open sea, salt air, dolphins, sea turtles, whales, sharks, pelicans, sea gulls and much much more. Admittedly, there are all sorts of things in the ocean that could bite your arms and legs off, or worse, but nobody is making you go in the water with them, unless you are a client who won't sign the contract.

In any event, I think you all can see now how much superior fishing is when compared to golf. There is really no comparison. Stop by Belle Harbour Marina in Tarpon Springs if you wish to further discuss the relative merits of fishing and golf with Flip the Bird and me.

Merle & Flip



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ON THE COVER: A very happy angler with a beautiful & healthy Snook caught on a recent outing with our very own, Captain George Hastick! Read more about his adventures by flipping to page 8 of this issue!

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DON'T LET THE HEAT BEAT YOU

by Captain George Hastick

August can be a magical time for anglers to venture out into the warm waters of Tampa Bay. During this month we should have a more consistent weather pattern and abundant fish, making it an exciting time for both novice and seasoned anglers alike. With its picturesque sunrise and sunsets and diverse marine life, Tampa Bay offers every angler a chance to create unforgettable memories this month.

While the August summer heat lingers, afternoon thunderstorms are common. These showers can provide excellent conditions for fishing soon after they pass, as they often stir up, cool the water and activate fish. The waters of the bay remain inviting, but anglers should stay aware of local forecasts and be prepared to adapt their plans accordingly.



habits and can be found near mangroves, inshore structures, on the beaches, in passes and around moving water at tidal points. Snook fishing is especially exciting as they tend to bite aggressively during low light conditions like dawn and dusk and when the water movement is good.

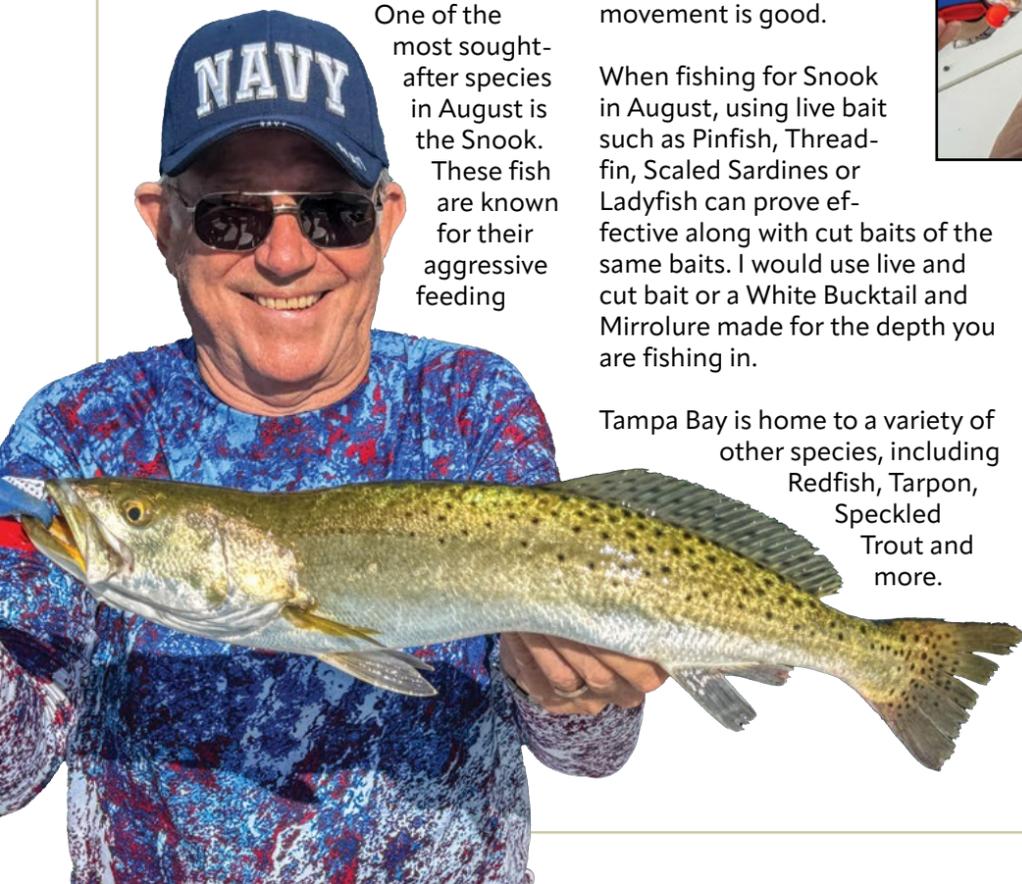
One of the most sought-after species in August is the Snook. These fish are known for their aggressive feeding

When fishing for Snook in August, using live bait such as Pinfish, Threadfin, Scaled Sardines or Ladyfish can prove effective along with cut baits of the same baits. I would use live and cut bait or a White Bucktail and Mirrolure made for the depth you are fishing in.

Tampa Bay is home to a variety of other species, including Redfish, Tarpon, Speckled Trout and more.

Tarpon are particularly prevalent in the bay during late Summer and targeting them can be an exhilarating experience; they are known for their acrobatics and can put up a thrilling fight. Anglers hoping to land a trophy Tarpon should focus on the deeper channels and nearby beaches, utilizing live blue crab, threadfin, cut bait or lures.

Speckled Trout are another popular catch during this time of year, often found in grassy areas in 4'-6' of water. These fish love artificials, making for an interactive fishing experience. Whether you are wading the shorelines or



drifting with the tide, casting soft plastics like Saltwater Assassin's 4-inch Sea Shad can yield exciting results.

For inshore fishing, live baiting is highly effective, particularly when targeting species like Snook and Redfish.

Artificial lures, during the early morning and late evenings, can also bring in big catches. Topwater lures are effective in finding fish and very exciting to watch the explosion of the hit!

If you're venturing offshore, consider bottom fishing for Grouper and Snapper. August is a prime time for these species, and the reefs around Tampa Bay are also holding them. Gag Grouper are closed this month in our area, but they are great action for catch and release.

As you plan your fishing trips this August, stay hydrated, bring cooling towels and watch the weather. Remember to check local fishing regulations and enjoy what Tampa Bay has to offer. Happy fishing! 🎣

Captain George Hastick of "Fish Hunter Fishing Charters" in St. Petersburg has been fishing the waters of Tampa for over 35 years. From novice to professional; Captain George will make you feel as if you have been fishing buddies for years. Contact him at 727-525-1005, www.FishTampa.com or email CaptGeorge@TampaBay.rr.com.

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IF SUMMER FISHING HAD A PERSONALITY

by Captain Justin Searcy

If Summer fishing had a personality, August would be the moody artist of the bunch. A little unpredictable, a bit dramatic and full of potential, if you know how to work with the conditions. When timing, and having a backup plan for your backup plan matters. This month is one of my favorites.

As Scallop season winds down, there's still time to savor one of Summers sweetest coastal traditions—your last chance to harvest these Gulf gems is August 18 here in the Pasco zone. The routine is simple, but rewarding: a morning boat ride out to the grass flats, mask and snorkel in hand, and before long you've gathered enough for a fresh batch of scallop pasta. Simple & fresh, a dish that always seems to taste better when earned. Another favorite way of mine to



wrap up a day like that is by pulling up to one of our local waterfront restaurants. In Tarpon Springs, some places will even cook your catch for you. Dock the boat, order a cold drink, and enjoy a plate of scallops or snapper you caught that morning. It's a full-circle kind of feeling that



keeps people coming back year after year.

Fishing this month calls for patience and a little creativity. Redfish are tucked in tighter, Mangrove Snapper are still around structure, and Trout can be found pushing onto the edges of the grass in the cooler parts of the day. Live bait gets the nod most mornings, especially when paired with clean moving water and a little cloud cover.

With the heat, fish look for shade. Skipping a bait way under the mangs or structure takes some finesse, but it's

worth it when the rod bends. So be patient and take your time with placement. We've also had luck running beach, especially where strong water movement meets structure. These fish have seen a lot by now specially the bigger ones so the stealthier and further away you can be, the better.

If you're looking to upgrade or get matched with the right gear before you head out, swing by the shop at Boat and Motor Super-stores in Tarpon Springs and



make sure to check out the lineup of Crowder rods. They carry the full Crowder lineup. My buddy Kyle has been putting them to the test lately, pulling in some solid Permit just offshore. The right setup makes a difference — and the crew at the shop can help you find exactly what fits your style.

For bait, I'll often stop by Get Bent Live Bait. Their floating dock at the mouth of the Anclote River is super convenient when heading out, and they also have a land-based spot at Tarpon Fishing Outfitters. Whether you need shrimp, pinfish, or whitebait, it's great having easy access to healthy, fresh baits.

So whether you're local or just visiting, August offers the chance



to slow things down and soak it all in, sunsets on the river, scallops in the cooler, a Snook bending the rod, and dinner waiting dockside.

August reminds us that fishing isn't just about the catch — it's about the moments, the memories, and the responsibility we carry with every trip. Whether you're gathering scallops with the family, catching and releasing snook in the mangroves, or fighting a Permit offshore, it's up to us to protect the waters we love.

Handle fish with care, know your limits, and leave out waters better than you found them. The Gulf gives us a lot — let's keep it that way for the next tide, the next season, and the next generation. Tight lines. 🎣

Captain Justin Searcy
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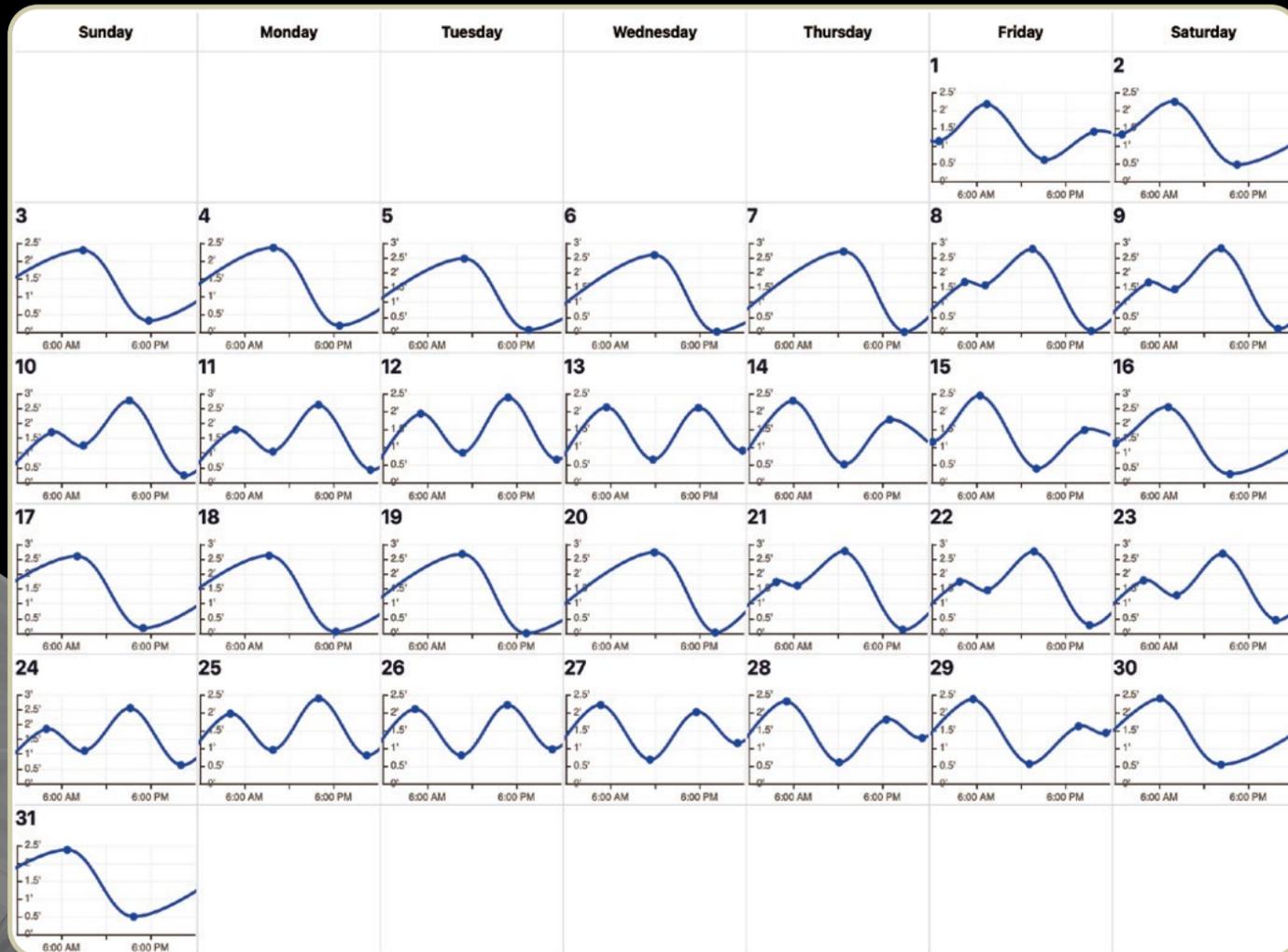
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Conversions for Clearwater Beach Area

High	Low	
-0:02	-0:10	Dunedin, St. Joseph Sound
-0:05	-0:15	Anclote Key, South End
+0:42	+0:42	Tarpon Springs, Anclote River
-0:07	-0:03	North Anclote Key
+0:41	+0:39	Old Port Tampa
+0:33	+0:53	Gulf Harbors
+0:42	+1:05	Hwy 19 Bridge, Pithlachascotee River
+0:50	+1:35	New Port Richey, Pithlachascotee River
+0:36	+0:43	Hudson, Hudson Creek

Conversions for St. Marks River Area

High	Low	
+0:23	+1:18	Everglades City
-1:17	-1:03	Cape Romano
-1:04	-1:08	Marco Island
-1:59	-2:04	Naples
-0:46	-0:09	Indian Bay
-0:59	-0:42	Bayport
-0:25	+0:23	Withlacoochee River

Conversions for Tampa Bay Area

High	Low	
+0:49	+0:58	Gandy Bridge
+1:38	+1:55	Courtney Campbell Cswy.
+1:38	+1:55	Safety Harbor
+0:20	+0:22	Ballast Point
+0:07	+0:26	Hillsborough Bay
+0:21	+0:29	McKay Bay Entrance
+0:41	+0:39	Old Port Tampa
-2:27	-2:24	Egmont Key
-2:53	-2:46	Anna Maria, Bradenton Bch
-2:10	-2:19	Anna Maria, City Pier
-1:24	-0:55	Bradenton, Manatee River
-0:30	+0:14	Redfish Pt., Manatee River
-2:22	-1:58	Mullet Key Channel, Skyway
+0:08	+0:17	Shell Point
-0:22	-0:29	Point Pinellas
-1:34	-1:30	Pass-a-Grille Beach
-1:32	-1:05	Gulfport
-1:18	-0:44	St. Pete Beach Causeway
-2:14	-2:04	John's Pass
-1:40	-1:18	Madeira Beach Causeway
-2:00	-1:25	Cortez, Sarasota Bay
-1:38	-0:58	Sarasota Bay
-2:02	-1:38	Venice Inlet
-0:57	-0:40	Englewood, Lemon Bay
-1:27	-0:59	Placida, Gasparilla Sound
+1:38	+1:56	El Jobean, Myakka River
+1:52	+2:30	Shell Point, Peace River
+1:06	+1:27	Punta Gorda, Charlotte Hbr.
-1:12	-1:56	Boca Grande, Charlotte Hbr.
-0:19	+0:26	Pineland, Pine Island
+0:43	+1:28	Matlacha Pass
-0:55	-1:14	Redfish Pass, Captiva Is.
-0:46	-0:20	Captiva, Pine Island Sound
-2:20	-2:28	Captiva, Gulf Side
-0:25	+0:16	Galt Isle, Pine Island Sound
-0:30	-0:44	St. James City, Pine Island
+2:08	+2:44	Fort Myers
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HOOK, LINE AND SINKER It's Almost Gag Grouper Season!

by Misty Wells

This year has been a year of change, and there have been big changes to the Grouper season on the West Coast of Florida. Anglers have been waiting with bated breath to find out just how many days of Gag Grouper we were going to get this year and they have allotted us 14 days. Starting September 1st, anglers will be heading out into the Gulf to deeper water hoping to land a trophy catch. The reason for the short season, according to the FWC, is that the closure is consistent with the season recently announced in federal waters to prevent overfishing, following the 2024 quota overage. Currently there is a lot of controversy in the fishing community about the way fish counts are being totaled, and the accuracy of how these numbers get calculated; they say they are working on better ways to collect real data.

As the Gag Grouper season shrinks, I am grateful that they kept the bag limit the same at two per person, not including Captain and Crew. Checking the FWC website, we are able to keep two 24' Gag Grouper per day during season with a four Grouper aggregate per person, per day.

So let's talk some Grouper talk and get you ready for the upcoming season, starting with just an overview. 50% of females mature at 24 inches and 3 years of age, all fish less than 35 inches total length are female, while most gags over 45 inches are males. Gag Grouper may live for up to 26 years and can grow to be 58 inches in length and weigh up to 81 pounds.

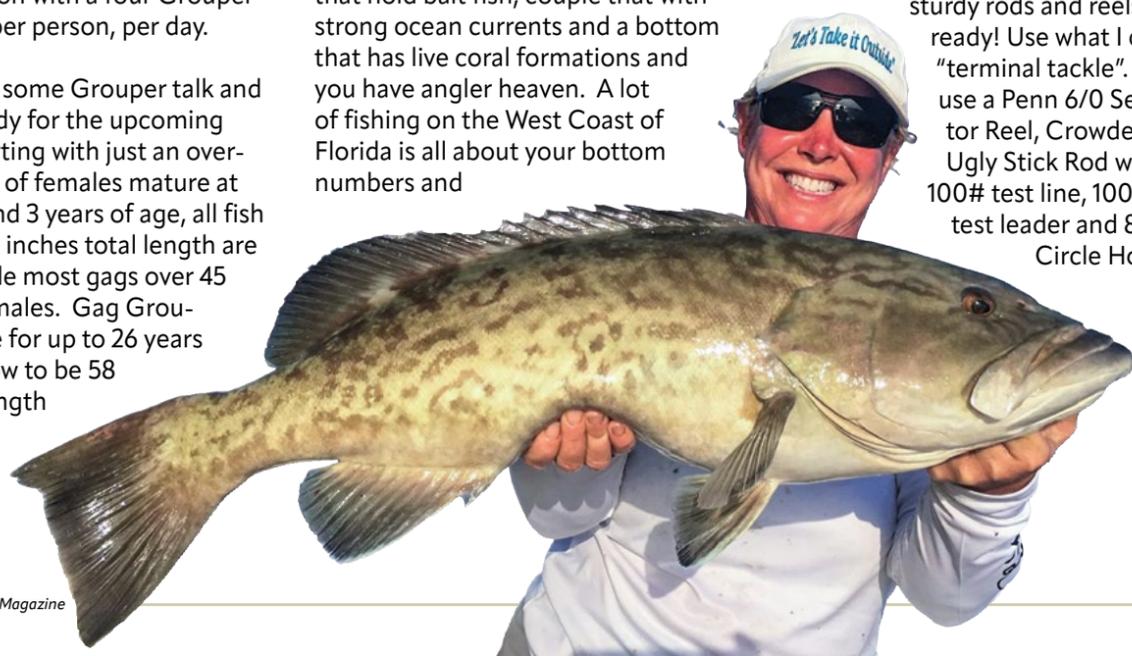
There are several different species of Grouper and everyone has their favorites. I personally love Gag Grouper as it seems to be meatier and I know it is harder to catch them. Now there are many grouper types that I have not caught like Black Grouper, Nassau Grouper, Warsaw and Yellow Edge, but they are on my list to pursue. Here in Pinellas County, we have a magical place off the West Coast of Florida called the "Middle Grounds" and this is a good place to start if you are dreaming about landing that prize Grouper.

Let's start with a little history of the Middle Grounds and why the fishing is so "epic" there. The Middle Grounds is about 348 square nautical miles of bottom structure with depths that range from 80 to 160 feet with loads of topical diversity. The Middle Grounds provides limitless steep ledges and peaks that hold bait fish, couple that with strong ocean currents and a bottom that has live coral formations and you have angler heaven. A lot of fishing on the West Coast of Florida is all about your bottom numbers and



at the Middle Grounds, if you know how to read a bottom machine, you can easily find great spots to drop down on. One mistake the anglers make in the Middle Grounds, however, is their anchor settings. Most folks have trouble properly anchoring and may find the fish, but can't catch them. These days a lot of vessels have a "Spot Lock" on them which does help some if the weather is calm. If you don't have one, learn how to anchor the right way.

Out in the Middle Grounds you can catch a wide variety of Grouper, but you better be ready and have your sturdy rods and reels ready! Use what I call "terminal tackle". I use a Penn 6/0 Senator Reel, Crowder or Ugly Stick Rod with 100# test line, 100# test leader and 8/0 Circle Hook.



A lot of folks like to fish braided line when they are targeting Gag Grouper, but trust me, you will land more fish on Mono. On the hook, you are better to start off with 1/2 cut Sardines to stink up the water and get the fish bite going. Then, once they are biting steady switch to live Pinfish. Don't be afraid to put a big Pinfish on your hook, but be ready because the big grouper will "hurt your feelings" if you don't reel as fast as you can to get them off the bottom.

With such limited time this season to catch Gags I would recommend going with a professional captain, but not just any captain will do. As more folks move to Florida or come visit it seems there are new captains popping up everywhere and honestly how do you know who is good and who is not? There is a huge difference between a Charter Boat Captain and a fisherman who is a captain. A Charter Boat



captain has a license and boat and hopefully knows a thing or two about catching fish, while a fisherman who is a captain is someone who knows where the fish are, will put you on them and make sure you get your limits. I would like to recommend a site that can help you find a great captain; it's called Captain Experiences and they personally vet and fish with their captains before they put them on their site. Some sites are "pay for play" but not these guys, I know them personally and they are fishy, in a good way.

Go to almost any seafood restaurant in Florida and Grouper is going to be on the menu. If its not, you might want to reconsider your dining choices. The Grouper supply peaks in the warm months of the year, however it is available year-round in Florida. Grouper appeals to almost any seafood

lover; it is flaky white fish with a mild flavor that can be cooked almost any way. Florida harvests over 85 percent of the all the Grouper landed in the United States and over 75 percent of that Grouper is caught and brought into Pinellas County. So "Yes" it is true, we are the "Grouper Capital of the World". Most commercial fisherman in our area fish the tried-and-true method of hook-and line, good ole' hand cranking to bring us these amazing fish from the deep.

One of the best bottom fishing captains on the West Coast of Florida is Captain Tommy Laronge of Unreel Fishing Outfitters at www.ucatchfish.com. They just purchased a 42' Invincible with triple 350s so when you are heading 80 miles offshore to go catching, you get there a lot faster than any other boat in Clearwater. Captain Tommy started his fishing career over 27 years ago working as a commercial fisherman learning almost every square inch of the Gulf and the Middle Grounds. As a Commercial Captain, Tommy would leave port for up to 5 to 7 days at a time, catch thousands of pounds of Grouper and Snapper and then head back in for a day or two until it was time to go again. This is where the work comes in, learning the waters like your own backyard, and building your "Loran Book" of numbers. What is a "Loran Book" you might ask? It is what I refer to as the Holy Grail, a captains livelihood where all his fishing numbers and deepest secrets are kept. Captain Tommy has spent over 27 years searching the Gulf for what lies beneath; the secret ledges, rock piles, crevices and cracks that all are home to our beloved Gag Grouper. Word to the wise, "don't ever come between a fisherman and his Loran Book", if you know what's good for you". Some other offshore captains I would recommend and have personally fished with are Captain Sam of Bottom Line Sport Fishing, and Captain Mark Fowex, of Markin Fish Charters, both located in Pinellas County.

Any time you go fishing pay attention because you are always going to learn something from your captain, crew or fellow angler. I have learned a lot from Captain Tommy over the 15 years we have been together, and we have landed some huge fish together. If you are looking to fill the box with some "personal best" Grouper catches, he is the guy that I recommend every time.

Gag season is almost here and no matter who you are fishing with you need to get ready and get out on the water because it will be over before you blink an eye. 📌

Misty Wells Producer & Host of Award Winning "Let's Take It Outside" TV show airing to 220 million on Discovery & Discovery GO & Plus & 17 other networks. Bass Pro-Outdoor Pro & Outdoor & Outdoor, Travel Writer. Founder of "A Reel Future" non-profit devoted to teaching the passion of fishing & conservation to foster children, over 4,000 children & counting. Watch at www.mistywells.com.



Bird Watching



Hanging with the Locals

Christmas ^{Fishing} Island

Don't you just love reading articles about fishing trips to 5 star locations? You know, fishing all day on sleek new boats, coming back after every day of fishing to a fully stocked bar and a four course meal. Well, this isn't one of those articles. This is an article about a place where the fishing is once in a lifetime, but the amenities are Spartan at best.

The place is Kiribati, officially the Republic of Kiribati (pronounced Keer-ee-boss). Kiribati is a country in the central Pacific Ocean. The population is just over 110,000 people across 32 islands. Kiribati has the distinction of owning more square miles of the Pacific Ocean than any other country in the world. This is because of the country is made up of a constellation of islands that are dispersed over 2,000 miles of ocean across all four hemispheres. Their largest source of income is fishing. They sell tuna fishing rights to foreign countries and the amount of tuna caught there every year puts sushi on tables around the world.

One of the islands of Kiribati is called Kiritimati (it is pronounced like "Christmas" because in the local language "ti" is sounded out as "s") and this is where the action is. This smallish island of 150 square miles has only five thousand inhabitants, but the sheer beauty and amazing fishery make it one of the most unique places in the world. Ev-



eryone on the island speaks the local language as well as English.

GETTING THERE

One thing I've learned about fishing destinations is, the harder it is to get there, the better the fishing and that is never more evident than with Kiritimati Island. There is only one way to get there from the US. You fly to Honolulu and then take a flight 2,000 miles south from Honolulu to Kiritimati Island in the middle of the ocean. There are only 2 flights a week and the same plane that gets you there also brings in a week's worth of food and supplies for the entire island. Once you get there, you find very few cars on the island. Most islanders walk around barefoot or ride bikes and mopeds, but the fishing lodges all have vehicles to bring anglers from the airport to their facilities.



THE ACCOMMODATIONS
There are around 5 fishing lodges on the island in total and that number is constantly in flux. We stayed at a lodge called The Villages and found it to be one of the premiere lodges in the area (although you wouldn't have guessed that by seeing the place). There is no Wi-Fi, no satellite, no Internet, no radio and no TV here. You are absolutely off the grid. Only certain SIM cards on certain cell phones work here and the reception is terrible and rarely works even when it does. You cannot drink the water on the island, so it's exclusively bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth.

eryone on the island speaks the local language as well as English.



The lodges seem to always be out of something. The week we were there the only place on the island that had beer was our lodge. Quite a few anglers from other lodges showed up to visit that week.

THE FISHING

Being an atoll in the middle of the ocean has its advantages. Namely the fishing is out of this world. People make the trek to Kiritimati Island for 2 reasons - Bonefish and Giant Trevally (GT). Two fish that couldn't be more different from each other, but also two fish that are greatly coveted by sportfisherman around the world.

Almost all the fishing is done by wading, but you need a boat to get to the where the fish are. Every morning a very Polynesian looking pontoon boat comes to the beach and picks you up for your day. The entire island is an atoll surrounding miles and miles of sand and flats within its perimeter. Its only a 30-minute boat ride over smooth water protected from the winds to get to the fishing grounds. On our first day of fishing I wanted to bend a rod and catch some smaller Bonefish. The Bonefishing here is crazy. You can catch 40+ Bonefish a day in the sub six-pound category. I fished that first day and easily caught over 25 by wading with a private guide that was amazing at spotting fish.



The next day I wanted to try my luck with some larger Bonefish. Kiritimati Island has no shortage of large Bonefish, but they have seen a fly or two in their time (Bonefish are catch & release). We spent the day wading for larger fish and caught 2 fish in the 10-pound range, several smaller fish and some Bluefin Trevally. Another angler at the lodge landed a Bonefish over 13 pounds that day.

One thing I quickly learned was to always carry two rods when wading. An 8 or 9 weight fly-rod for Bonefish and a very sturdy 12 weight (carried by the guide) for the Giant Trevally. Turns out the GT really enjoy eating Bonefish and one seemed to turn up at least once a day within casting range terrorizing the smaller Bonefish.

The next day I decided we should target Trevally. Kiritimati Island is home to a large population of Trevally including GTs, Bluefin Trevally and the more rare Golden Trevally. I never saw a single shark the entire time we were there so

the GT is the top of the food chain. The size of the GTs can be staggering. Some of the fishermen at our lodge were fishing for them with lures and chumming them up. They wound up catching multiple fish over 60 pounds. The only problem with this is it makes the large GTs progressively harder to catch on fly. Regardless, we still caught a couple of GTs in the 10 to 15 pound range and a several Blue Fin Trevally in the 6 to 8 pound range. We even broke off a nice Golden Trevally in the 25-pound range.



On the final day I mixed it up and fished for both Trevally and Bonefish. Instead of fishing inside the atoll, we decided to fish outside. This is basically wade fishing between the reef and the beach. The sheer amount and variety of fish here on the outside is also mind numbing. We walked up

on a school of 50+ pound Trevally and I thought for sure I was going to have a shot at a monster fish on fly, but they weren't interested in the fly at all. No problem. We still caught several Bluefin Trevally, Bonefish, a 10-pound triggerfish (they readily take flies here) and a ton of other fish. It was a day of exciting non-stop action.

All-in-all Kiritimati is an amazing place to fish. It's a little bit pricey to get there, but it's an experience you will never forget. The island is so beautiful, the water is crystal clear and the people could not be any friendlier. If you go, make sure you bring some toys for the kids. We brought coloring books, trinkets and candies

and were mobbed by the kids whenever we went out. They accept New Zealand dollars so make sure you get your money changed before you get there. Being a fishing guide is the most coveted job on the island, but they make only around \$125 a week, so make sure you bring enough local currency to tip your guide daily (around \$20 or so). There is no ATM on the entire island!

Also, if Kiritimati is on your list you should go soon. Global warming has affected this country more than any other. The official elevation of the island is 0 feet. In some areas we were wading and I remarked that the bottom was unusually firm and flat, only to be told that we were fishing on what used to be a working road before the rising level of the ocean covered it up. ❑

Joel Dubey is a resident of Tarpon Springs, Florida. He and his wife, Celia, own and operate Total Fitness in Tarpon Springs and they love to travel to exotic locations where they can hunt fish and enjoy experiencing the local culture.





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TALES FROM THE OLD GUY

by David Mallory

In 2007, Pauline and I flew to Ketchikan, Alaska for a three day Salmon and Halibut fishing trip. We touched base with our fishing host, Brad Saalsaa, to let him know we were in town a couple days early.

Our plan was to spend some time checking out Ketchikan before we moved to his lodge. We really enjoyed Ketchikan where we went hiking, had a picnic and went on a hummer tour of the area.

On Sunday morning Brad's wife picked us up and we moved to the fishing lodge, which was in the lower portion of Brad and his wife's house. There were three bedrooms with a bath, plus a beautiful trophy room where they had a TV, drinks and snacks. Monday morning, we met Brad's partner, Jim and his wife, at breakfast in the trophy room where we made our lunch for the day. The boat was only two minutes away by car so we were on the water before 7:00am. It took about two hours to get to the fishing area, but it went by quickly because the views were spectacular which included eagles and humpback whales. We arrived at the salmon fishing spot where we trolled using three or four rods at a time. We fished with downriggers at about 35 feet using lures. There was another guest from the lodge, so we three took turns on the bites.

That time of year was good for Coho and Silver Salmon, but there were a few King Salmon hanging around. Pauline and I caught 2 King Salmon, 14 Silvers and 1 Seabass.

One of the King Salmon was about 15 pounds. We then moved to the Halibut grounds where we fished in 297 feet of water with 150 pound test line with a heavy weight. We all caught Halibut! We could each keep one under 34 inches and one over 34 inches. We tried to catch one as close to under 34 inches as possible as we hoped to catch a bigger one also! Pauline and I caught 12 Halibut, with the biggest about 19 pounds. We fished until about 4:00pm, then headed back with tired arms and bodies. It was a long way to reel those Halibut to the surface from the bottom where they hung out! When we got back, we had a drink while Brad and Jim's wives cooked a great dinner of Halibut for our supper. We were in bed by 9:00pm and eager for day two.

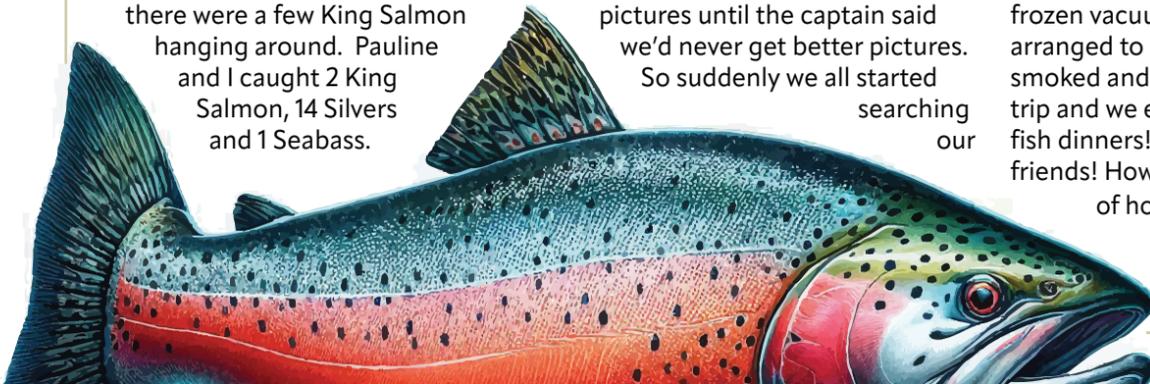
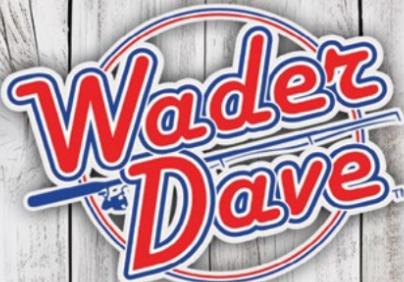
Day two was the same story. Just as we got to the Salmon spot, eight Humpback Whales popped out of the water about 50 yards from the boat using bubbles to trap their breakfast. We were all so much in awe being so close to them that none of us thought to take pictures until the captain said we'd never get better pictures. So suddenly we all started searching our

backpacks for our cameras – this was pre-cell phone cameras! Salmon fishing that day was a little sparse so we went to the halibut fishing grounds where we caught Halibut, Red Snapper and Rock Cod. The biggest Red Snapper was about 17 pounds and the biggest Halibut was 67 pounds. Our arms and bodies were ready to head back to the lodge again after a great day of fishing. We enjoyed a wonderful steak dinner after which we went straight to bed.

The third day looked bad for weather. It was calling for 6 foot seas and gale winds. Brad and Jim thought we could outrun it and beat the storm. It was rough going and took us longer, but we made it after bouncing into the air all the way. We fished Salmon again and caught Coho and Pinks. The whales treated us again with another awesome show. Later we went to the Halibut area where we caught more Halibut and a few new species - Rock cod and a 16 pound Ling Cod.

The next day Brad's wife took us to the Ketchikan airport and we flew home to Tampa with 197 pounds of frozen vacuum sealed fish. We also arranged to have thirteen Salmon smoked and canned. It was a great trip and we enjoyed many great fish dinners! So did many of our friends! However, we did use alot of hooks. ☑

- David Mallory

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AHOY MATES! IT'S THE TAMPA BAY BOAT SHOW!

by Dave Labell

Chart your course the Florida State Fairgrounds on Sept. 26, 27, 28 Enjoy walking around millions of dollars of inventory on hand from Tampa Bay's leading boat dealers. The Tampa Bay Boat Show is a grand event showcasing area boat dealers/manufacturers, the latest in boating and fishing supplies.



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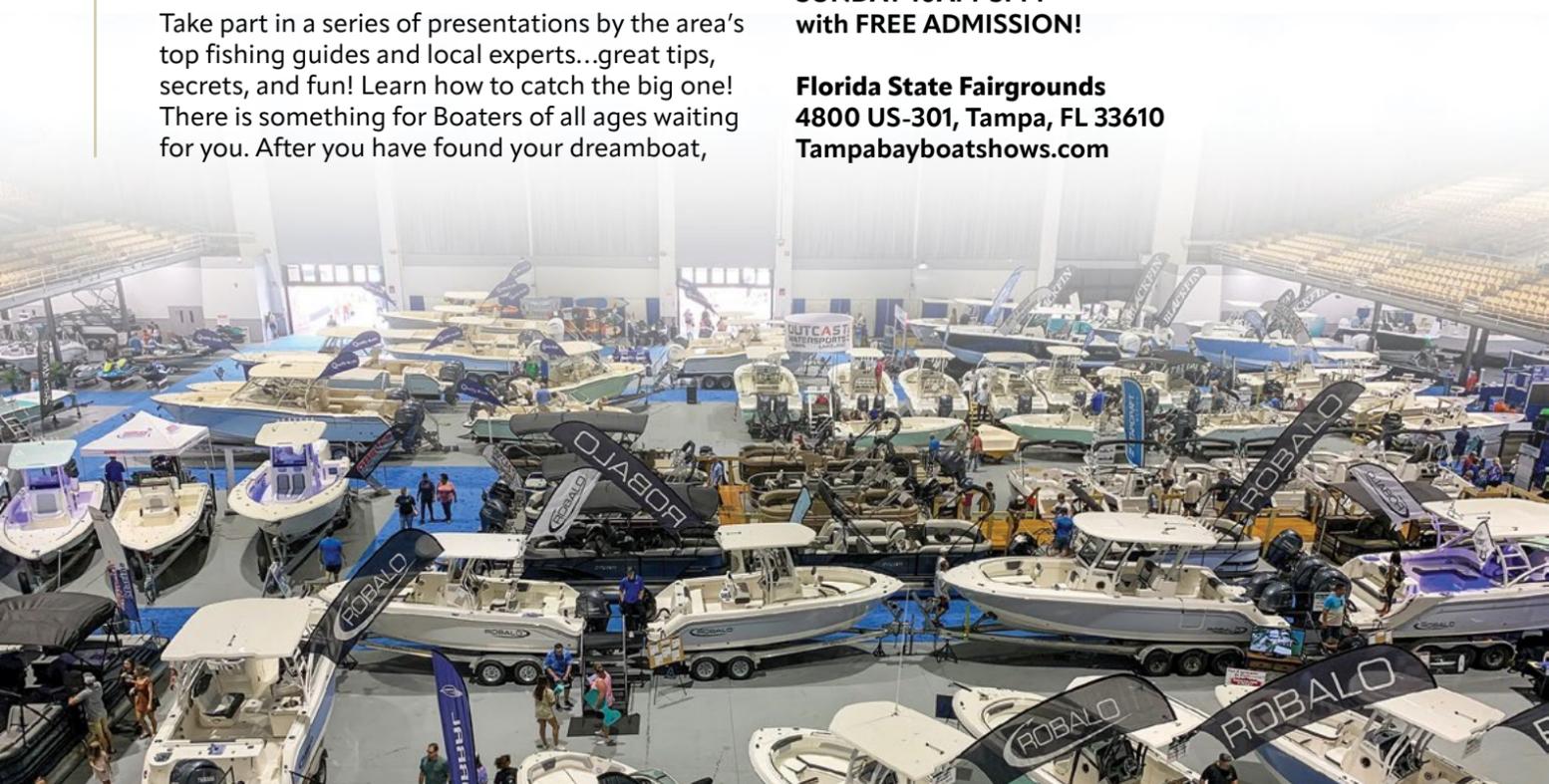
go and explore the many exhibits of the clothing, sunglasses, boating and docking accessories and so much more.

The event is open to the public, and admission is free so bring the family and make a day of it. You could be on the water before the weekend is over.

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Change is in the air and the fish pattern are no exception. Look for big Snook slowly working their way back from the passes into the grass flats ready to eat after a long spawning season.

Best bet is cut bait on the bottom in the early morning hours due to high temperatures. Fresh cut Threadfin Sardines or Ladyfish are my "go-to" baits this month for the bigger fish.

Later in the afternoon look for shaded areas around mangroves with moving water for Redfish and Mangrove Snapper; my favorite bait is dollar size Pinfish under a float, deep enough to keep them just off the bottom.

ABOUT THE CAPTAIN

Captain Sergio Atanes fishes the Florida waters, specializing in and around the West Coast of Florida and Tampa Bay. His show, Fishing Adventures Florida, is about two captains sharing their knowledge and experience of the local waters...encouraging others to share in their love of what the outdoors has to offer. Their goal is to educate, entertain and share the experience of fishing opportunities in the area.

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LET'S TAKE IT OUTSIDE: SEASON 6

by Misty Wells

Big Announcement Onshore Offshore readers! Misty Wells here, letting you know that "Let's Take it Outside" Season 6 presented by "Live Wildy" is about to launch on Discovery Channel on August 24.



Join me as I visit the State of Alaska for the first time, landing in Sitka, Alaska at the Wild Strawberry Lodge on the hunt for my first Halibut and Wild Koho Salmon. I take you all the way up North America to Niagara County where my daughter, Hudson, and I fish Lake Ontario for huge King Salmon and join in the annual "Smelt Festival."

If you are looking for a warmer location, my cost host Steve and I head back to the "World Famous" Crocodile Bay, Costa Rica and attempt to chase down my first Marlin and anything else that will bite. For the first time ever, I am teaming up with Batson Custom Rods and putting them to the test as I fish 100 miles offshore with Captain Tommy Laronge and the Batson team putting those rods to the test on some huge Yellowfin Tuna.

My son Brennan and I find a hidden gem in the State of Arkansas, Hot Springs where we catch our first Striper and go on the hunt for hidden gems in the local mines.



Of course, don't worry we will be hitting a lot of great locations in the State of Florida showing you some great destinations to "take it outside" for fishing and outdoor adventures.



I am proud to say "Let's Take it Outside" is airing on over 17 networks worldwide to over 220 million viewers. You can view my show in many different ways from standard TV to a number of digital channels for free and on demand. Look for all the seasons of "Let's Take it Outside" on Discovery Channel, Discovery GO & Plus, Waypoint TV, Carbon TV, Canada's Wild TV, Colorado's Mountain TV, Flow TV

in the Caribbean, Heartland TV, Discover Florida, and TCT network just to name a few.

Make sure to subscribe to my YouTube channel where you will get all the episodes for free and bonus videos throughout the year.

Thank you for being part of the "Let's Take it Outside" family of viewers, reach out directly to me if you have great ideas for my next season!

Tight Lines,

Misty Wells
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CREATURES OF THE DARK

by Captain Sergio Atanes

In August, high temperatures and midday thunderstorms often turn many anglers into night creatures searching for their prey. Several advantages come into play; the night brings out the best in tarpon, snook, trout and black drum fishing and some tolerable conditions.

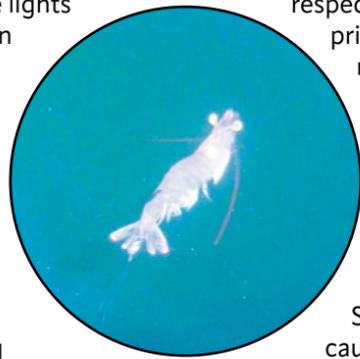


Fishing from shore, the Gandy Bridge on the St. Pete side, offers a great location for the whole family to spend several hours on a weekend catching fish. Boaters can launch either at the Courtney Campbell boat ramp or the "Salty Sol" boat ramp located one mile west of Westshore Boulevard on Gandy Boulevard.

The Skyway Fishing Pier offers light, good water movement and a nice family friendly atmosphere plus a large selection of fish species like Grouper, Flounder & Mackerel.

The best fishing takes place for about a half hour after sundown through 2:00am. A freelined live bait drifted under the lights will draw the attention of Trout, Snook and Tarpon.

Products on the market like the "Hydro Glow Fish Light" are designed to vertically suspend below the surface of the water radiating a bright green glow in all directions. This design utilizes 100% of the light generated by the light for the designed purpose, thus attracting fish. The bright fluorescent green light gets its effectiveness by attracting the entire aquatic food chain. From microscopic plankton to various sizes of minnows, to many species of game fish. Boat manufacturers now use products like the "Shadow Caster Underwater Lights" that are built into the hull making them even more appealing.



shadow line into the light and back into the dark. Most importantly, when dock fishing at night, always respect the owners right to privacy and avoid loud noises by using the stealth system. That means being quiet is key!

Some of my favorite live baits are Shad and Greenback Sardines. Both can be caught under the bridges at night with a baitcast net.

Shrimp are on top of the food chain except for summer months as they tend to be on the smaller size and are often rejected by big fish.

For targeting Tarpon, pass crabs are tops on my list. Black Drum and Redfish also have a hard time passing on fresh cut blue crab presented on the bottom by the bridge pilings.

Remember to pick a spot with light or create your own using your boat underwater lights or a "Hydro Glow" light. The light must be strong enough to draw in small baitfish and be patient; they will come. Also don't overlook bottom fishing, as I have caught Snook, Cobia and Black Drum on a bottom rig while catching Snook, Trout and Tarpon on the surface.

Boaters need to anchor under the bridge with the stern of the boat just even with the shadow line, where the light from the bridge casts its shadow. Snook and Tarpon tend to cruise the dark side and strike the baitfish that are attracted to the

light. And remember, the brighter lights attract more bait, thus creating better chances of catching fish.

I recommend medium spinning tackle, 15 to 20# test line paired with a 30# test leader with a 2/0 hook for Trout Snook and Redfish. On conventional tackle a 30 to 40# test line paired with a 60# test leader and 5/0 hook for the Tarpon, Black Drum, Cobia and big Redfish with many weighing in the 30 to 40# range.

Black Drum are plentiful this month and their favorite bait is a half of a fresh blue crab which can be caught along the shoreline or purchased at the local bait and tackle stores. In Tampa Bay I have found the Gandy and Howard Franklin Bridges to be the most productive. The smaller bridges of the Courtney Campbell Causeway, Skyway and Fort Desoto area are top Snook producers.

For more info, visit FISHING ADVENTURES FLORIDA on YouTube with weekly local fishing reports and our how-to segmentt, Captain Sergio's Fishing Academy, where we teach new techniques and introduce new tackle to help you catch more fish. ☑



Captain Sergio Atanes is the host of Fishing Adventures Florida and Captain Sergio Fishing Chronicles on YouTube, Waypoint TV, Carbon TV, Outdoor Action TV and Angling TV. For info call 813-973-7132 or email: atanes@msn.com.

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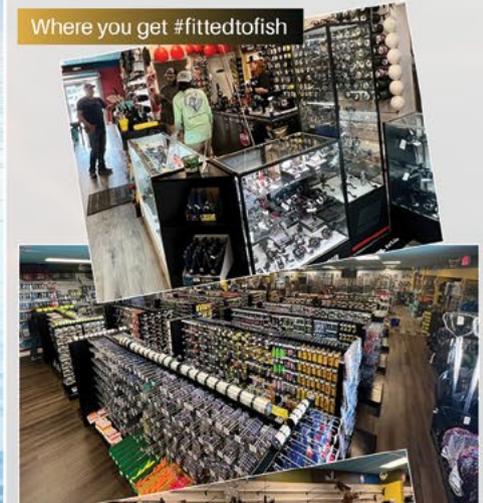
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