

JCAA NEWSPAPER JULY 2017

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*

(Published on June 19th, 2017)

Monthly Meeting at JCAA office, 1594 Lakewood Rd., Ste. 13, Toms River

"WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday, June 27th, 2017

Starting at 7:30 PM

At JCAA Office

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, July 13th, 2017

Starting at 7:30 PM at JCAA Office

**OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE
JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.
1594 Lakewood Road (Rt. 9), Victoria Plaza Ste. 13
Toms River, NJ 08755**

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JCAA Newspaper Publisher Tom Fote

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This publication is printed and mailed one week prior to each regular monthly meeting of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association. One of the prime goals of JCAA is to get accurate information into public hands as soon as possible.

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**JCAA General Membership Meetings are for club representatives and invited guests only. These meetings are not open to the general public. If you would like to attend as a guest, call the President at 908-913-0551 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**

## 2017 OFFICERS

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| <b>Tournament Dir.</b>     | Paul Turi    | 609-660-2126 |

**Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page**

## **NOTICE**

*The next JCAA General Membership Meeting on June 27<sup>th</sup> will be held at the JCAA Office, 1594 Lakewood Rd. (Rte. 9), Ste. 13, Toms River.*

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

**June 27<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**June 27<sup>th</sup>** Tautog ASMFC Hearing in Trenton

**July 13<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

*No JCAA General Meeting in July*

**August 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>** ASMFC Meeting Week

**August 5<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Fluke Tournament

**August 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>** Joint ASMFC & MAFMC Meeting

**August 10<sup>th</sup>** Fluke Tournament Awards Presentations

**August 10<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

*No JCAA General Meeting in August*

**September 14<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**September 26<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

## **JCAA 23rd Annual Fluke Tournament**

*By Paul Turi*

### **Take a Shot at Winning \$50,000!**

The JCAA 23rd Annual Fluke Tournament will soon take place on Saturday, **August 5<sup>th</sup>** and the Awards Presentations will take place on Thursday evening, August 10<sup>th</sup> at the Clarion Hotel on Rt. 37 east in Toms River, NJ. Registrations start at 3:00PM and the presentations will start at 7:00PM.

Early entry fee is \$130 by July 24<sup>th</sup>. After July 24<sup>th</sup> the entry fee is \$160.

This year we have three prizes for early entrants who catch the largest fluke: 1<sup>st</sup> place \$1,000, 2<sup>nd</sup> place \$500 & 3<sup>rd</sup> place \$250. So by entering by July 24<sup>th</sup> you will be eligible to win this additional money.

There is an application to enter the tournament in this newspaper or you can go to [jcaa.org](http://jcaa.org) and either download an entry form and fax it to the office or you can sign up on-line using [our link](#) to **Eventbrite**. If you use Eventbrite you may sign up as late as 9PM on August 5<sup>th</sup>, the night before the tournament. Or if you wish, you can call the office and I will take your application over the phone.

If you entered the tournament and you didn't sign up for the \$50,000 Doormat Fluke Category or any of the calcuttas, you can still do so. Just call the office and give me your credit card over the phone and I will add it to your entry and process a new affidavit. However, you will have to return your original affidavit before I can reissue a new affidavit.

In addition to the \$50,000 Doormat Fluke Category prize, there will be a 1<sup>st</sup> place prize for each port of \$1200. Also for each port for 2<sup>nd</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> place will be merchandise prizes yet to be determined.

Last year we paid out over \$60,000 in cash and prizes! The overall tournament winner won \$13,325.

The **Grand Prize** Drawing at the Awards Presentations this year will be a 14' Starcraft boat, 20hp Yamaha engine and a Yacht Club trailer.

The boat is being donated to JCAA by **Starcraft Boats**. **Yamaha** is again donating the engine. The trailer is being donated by **Yacht Club Trailers**.

You do not have to weigh in a fish to be eligible to win the boat, motor and trailer! However, you must be present at the Awards Presentations at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River on August 10<sup>th</sup> for the drawing.

#### **Our Major Sponsors this year are:**

- Yamaha Outboards
- Starcraft Boats
- Tica Fishing Tackle
- Canyon Reels
- The Fisherman
- Fuel Ox
- Costa Sunglasses

#### **We have four 1<sup>st</sup> Place Port Sponsors for this year. They are:**

- Hoffman's Marina
- South Harbor Marine
- Fisherman's Headquarters
- Liberty Landing Marina

## **Please support our sponsors!**

This tournament is JCAA's largest fundraiser. Our sponsors spend a lot of money helping to make this tournament a success and make JCAA successful. It takes a lot of money to run JCAA and without their support there would be no JCAA. I can't emphasize enough how important they are to the success of not only the tournament but JCAA as an organization. They deserve your support.

We will be having **free** food and drink at the Awards Presentations on August 10th at the Clarion Hotel. We will have hamburger sliders, hot dogs, soft drinks, etc. Yes, **free**! So bring the family and crew and have some fun and let's load up the banquet hall and make a nice impression for our tournament sponsors!

## **President's Report**

*By John Toth*

On May 21st, I attended the Governor's Surf Tournament at Island Beach State Park and I always look forward to this event because I see so many anglers (young and old) having such a good time! This tournament is sponsored by the JCAA along with the NJ Federation of Sportsmen's Club, the NJ Beach Buggy Association (NJBBA) the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife and the NJ Division of Parks and the NJ DEP.

The weather was nice and the winners catching the biggest fish in each division were given very nice prizes that included rods, reels and other prizes that were donated by various tackle manufactures. NJ DEP Commissioner, Bob Martin, presented the prizes and he told me that he really enjoys doing it! Like me, he enjoys watching the winners receive their prizes, especially the little ones, who hold on to their prizes like their life depended on it and **nobody** was going to take their prizes away from them!

Governor hopeful, Kim Guadagno, always shows up at this tournament to fish at it along with her kids and Tom Fote is usually with them to assist them as needed. She did not attend it this time due to her busy campaign schedule.

Commissioner Martin in his address to the crowd spoke about the struggle he and his staff experienced in coming to terms with the 2017 fluke regulations and interfacing with the various agencies and personnel involved in the decision-making

process. He did not know that much about fluke fishing, but he certainly knows a lot more about it now!

He also indicated that he is well aware of the issues involved in the sea bass regulations and that he and his staff will also try to weigh in on changing them just like he did with fluke. In many ways, the sea bass regulations are worse than the fluke situation given that the sea bass stocks are in good shape, yet we continue to have our quota for them reduced and we are saddled with confusing seasons to fish for them. Who can remember those open and closed dates and the fish that are allowed and not allowed to be caught?

Commissioner Martin closed his remarks by saying with the new elections coming up, he will no longer be representing the NJ DEP at the Governor's Tournament that he has enjoyed so much in the past and he wished all of us well!

I want to thank Bill Browne and Tom Fote for helping me staff the JCAA booth at this tournament along with Greg Kucharewski who put the JCAA banner above our table.

I also want to remind all of you that the JCAA Fluke Tournament is coming up soon on August 5th and that there are cash prizes for **early entrants by July 24th (1st place - \$1,500, 2nd place - \$500 and 3rd place- \$250)** who catch the largest fluke. More information on the tournament is in this newsletter, so get in the game and win some money!

**Good Luck to all of you!**

## **Fisheries Management & Legislative Report**

*By Tom Fote*

### **Summer Flounder**

This has been the spring and summer of the never-ending summer flounder story. As this paper goes to press on Tuesday, I will be on a conference call later that afternoon with NOAA defending New Jersey's position that the summer flounder regulations in place are consistent with the requirements of the Amendment. Yes, we took a novel way to meet those requirements by trying to reduce hook and release mortality through education and smaller size limits. We are killing more summer flounder in New Jersey because of high size limits

through hook and release mortality than we are taking home. We have also reduced the number of fish that the recreational community takes home in New Jersey by over 75%. How have we done this? Every time you increase the size, you increase the weight which means anglers are taking home less fish but larger fish. With a size limit of 19 inches we would probably be less than 20% of what we were on a quota of equal size than when we did with smaller size limits. The stocks are 1/3 larger than they were when we started the rebuilding process, but comparing a quota of 16 million pounds with the size limits then and the size limits now, anglers would be taking home less than 20% of what they did at the beginning of rebuilding.

With all that said, I have a hard time understanding how New Jersey and other states in the Mid-Atlantic region are catching as many fish as they are. We keep landing more summer flounder and other species in New Jersey with at least 50,000 boats less than in 2007 – 2014. We are also landing more fish with 2 million fewer recreational trips for the same period of time. I don't have the figures for 2016 but I don't imagine there will be an increase. In fact, I would not be surprised if there is a decrease. With all the changes we have made to the recreational survey data, no matter what name you give it, it still is not working and we are still getting crazy numbers like the NY sea bass catch for 2016.

Hopefully, what has transpired in the last few months, with New Jersey leading this discussion, will encourage other states, the Mid-Atlantic Council and NOAA to reevaluate the way we are managing summer flounder. They need to look at the way we manage recovered stocks and the impact of discard mortality. Stay tuned.

### **Black Sea Bass**

It is my experience that the longer the meeting day, the more likely we are to make decisions that we eventually regret. The black sea bass decision at the May ASMFC meeting is a good example. There were reasons this happened. First, we were looking at a stock that is 230% above where it is supposed to be and still have not figured out how to deal with increasing the quota. Second, there was fear that NMFS would act in the federal waters on black sea bass even though we are fishing on a quota below where it should be. Finally, people were looking at the clock as we passed 6:00 knowing there would still be a couple of hour discussion about summer flounder. For these reasons, a hasty motion was made and passed

without looking at the consequence of the motion or considering which states would feel the greatest impact. New Jersey would feel the most significant negative impact with this motion even though New Jersey was not the major contributor to the problem. One of the states from the north supporting the motion would see no impact at all since they would be closed for the winter fishery for black sea bass. Other states in the northern region that would have an open fishery would experience only minor cutbacks. New Jersey's winter fishery is one of the most important for black sea bass and fills the gap when there is no other fishery open. We went from a 15 fish bag limit to 5 fish where other states in our region took a 2 fish cutback, no cutback at all or a 5 fish cutback. Without any input from the technical committee, we have no clue on how these possible regulation changes would accomplish the goal. The southern states voted for this just because they didn't want NMFS to change the regulations in federal waters. We need to schedule time at the August meeting to adequately discuss the problem and come up with a new motion that does not unfairly impact one state. I know this decision was not intentional but we need to fix it. I am sure commissioners will realize this was an unfair outcome and not what was intended.

### **NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife Web Page**

The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife [web page](#) is a valuable of information for any fresh water or saltwater angler and the hunters of New Jersey. You can find out all the current regulations and a wealth of other information like the alert on the temporary closure of an area to Mobile Sport Fishing Vehicles on IBSP. That alert is below. You can also sign up to get alerts when new things are posted on the web page. The state of New Jersey is helping to reduce the hook and release mortality of summer flounder and all other species. They are tackling the summer flounder problem through pamphlets, stories and releases. They will also be posting YouTube videos. NMFS and the American Sportfishing Association has committed to assist New Jersey with resources in this effort. Below are two articles that are posted on the web page. Over the years, I get a lot of questions on how the intercepts work. One of these articles is a good explanation on what the interceptor is doing. The other article begins the discussion on how we begin

to reduce the hook and release mortality. If you have suggestions, please forward them to New Jersey Bureau of Marine Fisheries. I know as good conservation anglers we are always looking for ways to release fish unharmed. I suggest you sign up for the alerts or just go to the web page on a regular basis.

### **Draft Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Tautog**

The notice for the NJ ASMFC Tautog hearing is below. There are some interesting changes proposed so please read them and make your comments. The hearing is at 6:30PM which is the same night as the JCAA general meeting at our office in Toms River. If you are a JCAA Club representatives stop by before you go to the meeting so you can discuss it at the meeting.

### **States Schedule Hearings on ASMFC Tautog Draft Amendment 1**

Arlington, VA – The states of Massachusetts through Virginia have scheduled hearings to gather public comment on Draft Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Tautog. The details of those hearings follow.

#### **New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife**

Tuesday, June 27, 2017 from 6:30 – 9:30 p.m.  
Ocean County Administration Building  
Public Hearing Room 119  
101 Hooper Avenue  
Toms River, New Jersey  
Contact: Russ Allen at 609.748.2020

The Draft Amendment proposes a fundamental change in tautog management, moving away from management on a coastwide basis towards regional management. In addition, Draft Amendment 1 proposes the establishment of a commercial harvest tagging program, as well as new goals and objectives, biological reference points and fishing mortality targets, and a stock rebuilding schedule.

Specifically, Draft Amendment 1 proposes delineating the stock into four regions due to differences in biology and fishery characteristics, as well as limited coastwide movement.

## Table 1: Four-Region Management Approach

1. Massachusetts – Rhode Island
2. Long Island Sound (CT and NY LIS)
3. New Jersey – New York Bight
4. Delaware – Maryland – Virginia

Management options by region have been developed in response to the 2016 stock assessment update. Long Island Sound and New Jersey-New York Bight would be required to take harvest reductions due to the regional overfishing stock status, while Massachusetts-Rhode Island and Delaware-Maryland-Virginia would not have to take harvest reductions, but are proposing regional measures.

A commercial harvest tagging program is being proposed to address an illegal, unreported and undocumented fishery that has persisted for more than a decade. Reports of illegally harvested fish have been documented in cases against fishermen, fish houses, and at retail markets and restaurants. The tagging program, which would accommodate both the live and dead commercial markets, was recommended by the Commission's Law Enforcement Committee to increase accountability in the fishery and curb illegal harvest. A tautog tag trial was conducted to investigate the impact of the tags on the resource and found no mortality or degradation to fish health.

The Draft Amendment is available [here](#) or on the Commission website, [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org) (under Public Input). Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Amendment either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on July 14, 2017 and should be forwarded to Ashton Harp, FMP Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at [aharp@asmfc.org](mailto:aharp@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Tautog Draft Amendment 1).

Final action on the Amendment is scheduled to occur in August. For more information, please contact Ashton Harp, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [aharp@asmfc.org](mailto:aharp@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

## It's a Short! Release that Summer Flounder Alive for the Next Angler

by Matthew Heyl, Hourly Biologist,  
Bureau of Marine Fisheries, June 7, 2017

Have you ever been on a party boat just to hear the mate say "it's a short" or on a jetty surrounded by inquisitive people just to tell them "it's a short." It something anglers say and hear all too often these days. With summer flounder regulations what they are, many more shorts are being caught and released than ever before...but are those fish surviving to be caught another day? The answer is no! Not all summer flounder caught survive being released, but there are ways to improve their chance of survival.

Summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*), also known as fluke, are common throughout New Jersey's estuarine and coastal waters from late spring to late fall. They can grow to more than 30 inches and weigh in excess of 20 pounds, but 1 to 3-pound fish are more common with an 8-pound fish being considered large. The New Jersey State Record was landed in 1953 and weighed 19 pounds, 12 ounces.

Not all summer flounder are keepers, in fact, most fish caught during the season are released. During the season the short-to-keeper ratio can reach 40:1 in some New Jersey locations, but with various hooks, baits, approaches, and release methods New Jersey's favorite flatfish can be released alive and have a chance to be caught again.

### Hooks and Baits

Hook technology has greatly improved in the past few years with different styles, colors, and angles being created yearly. A hook has five different aspects that vary depending on the style of the hook including an eye, shank, bend, gap, and point. There are dozens of hooks anglers use to target summer flounder, but three common hooks are the J hook, wide gap hook, and circle hook.

**The J hook** is the most common hook that can be used for almost every species of fish and is what people think of when they picture a hook. J hooks work well when fishing artificial lures or drifting and allow the angler to feel the bite of the fish and excitement of setting the hook. The negative aspect of a J hook is that an angler must pay attention, for there is an increased chance of a fish "swallowing the hook" and becoming gut hooked. Due to the summer flounder's, large mouth and aggressive nature, 5/0 to

7/0 sized- hooks are recommended. A study by Fairleigh Dickinson University shows that these size hooks work well to reduce the risk of gut hooking fish, reducing fish mortality. An angler fishing with these size hooks catch larger summer flounder, which increases the chances of catching a legal-size fish.

**Wide gap hooks** are most often associated and most popular with summer flounder anglers. At retailers, these hooks are often called fluke hooks. The wide gap hook is like the J hook but the bend is longer creating a wide gap between the shank and the point. This versatile hook works well while fishing with bait when drifting from a boat or casting from shore and has good results when fished with artificial bait. Like the J hook and the angler feels the bite and hooks the fish, but due to the fact of the wider gap in the hook, gut hooking is possible but not as common. The angler feels the bite and hooks the fish like the J hook, but due to the fact of the wider gap in the hook, gut hooking is possible but not as common.

**Circle hooks** are increasing in popularity with anglers that are targeting summer flounder. This unique hook looks like a wide gap hook with the main difference being the point bent back towards the shank. Many anglers prefer to use circle hooks since once a fish is hooked it normally stays hooked. A circle hook works differently than the previously mentioned hooks; the fish hooks itself. The angler does not need to set the hook. This way of fishing can be frustrating to an angler new to this approach, but once mastered some anglers fish only circle hooks. Circle hooks work well when fished with bait from a boat or from shore. Common sizes of circle hooks for fluke fishing are 4/0 to 6/0.

Studies from the New York and Virginia Sea Grant program sampled 461 summer flounder by hook and line. The study used sprout hooks (type of J hook), wide gap hooks, and circle hooks to follow fish that were hooked properly and fish that where hooked internally. The summer flounder that were hooked properly had an average mortality rate of 7.5% between the three hooks. The hooks had similar rates of fish mortality. When hooked internally the sprout hook lead to a fish mortality of 80%, wide gap hook mortality was 60%, and circle hook mortality was 56.5%. Interesting to note is that most fluke caught in this hook and line study where caught using circle hooks.

Fluke are aggressive predatory fish and will consume many different species of fish and crustaceans as well as artificial offerings. When fishing with a big bait, use a bigger hook. For example, fishing a peanut bunker or snapper bluefish with the same hook that an angler would use for a clam or squid strip is only encouraging a summer flounder to become gut hooked. If fishing with a smaller bait like a silverside or mummichog try fishing a circle hook to decrease short fish mortality.

### **Approaches and Release Methods**

The most exciting part of summer flounder fishing is anticipating and receiving that first "hit" of the day. An approach to make sure the angler feels that hit is as simple as being in contact with the fishing pole. With advances in sensitivity technology with fishing line types like monofilament and braid, an angler with a finger on line can feel every bump, crevasse, or fish hit while fishing.

All too often anglers leave a fishing rod in the water unattended. This is known as dead-sticking. As soon as the angler walks away a fish will hit and without an angler to set the hook, the fish will swallow the hook, and become gut hooked, leading to increased fish mortality. If you must leave or take a break, ask a friend to "watch the rod" or just simply just reel up.

After feeling that hit and catching a short summer flounder what should you do next? The simple answer is return the fish to the water as soon as possible, but there is much more the angler can do to decrease fish mortality. Summer flounders have a slimy layer that is a frontline protection from bacteria. A break in a fish's slime is like a cut on a human's skin. The best way to protect the fish is the "less is more" method. The less the fish is touched the more of a chance the fish will survive. At the water surface the fish should be netted, then if not being kept a rag dipped in salt water should be used to hold the fish and a pair of pliers used to release the hook from the fish.

If the fish is gut hooked it is recommended that the line be cut as close to the hook as possible. Fish mortality is greater if an angler attempts to "rip" a hook out of the fish damaging the important gills. A hook that's cut off will eventually rust and will reduce fish mortality. A summer flounder should never touch a deck, jetty, beach, bulkhead, sod bank, or pavement unless the fish is going to be dinner.

### **Fish for the Future**

Ethical angling goes beyond summer flounder fishing. All New Jersey's marine fish can benefit from

proper release methods. Decide on what species of fish you will be targeting and know the minimum size before fishing. Mates on party and charter boats will have a wealth of knowledge in regards to minimum size, but if fishing from the shore or jetty download the New Jersey Fish and Wildlife App for updated minimum lengths. Also, at many of the inlets throughout the state there are signs that have the up-to-date minimum fish lengths.

Tackle that is heavy enough to reel a fish in quickly is beneficial to the fish. An exhausted fish can lead to increased fish mortality. One of the best parts of fishing is fighting the fish, with the thrill of landing it. Many fish are never landed. Anglers that do not use the correct line, terminal tackle, and rod are guaranteed to lose more fish than they catch. Always know your fish. An angler would not want to use an ultra-lite rod while targeting 40-pound striped bass. Anglers that have questions or are not sure on which tackle to use should visit one of the many tackle shops around the state.

While preparing for that big hit when soaking a clam or casting a popper plug there are techniques to decrease fish mortality of a hooked fish. If bait fishing use a circle hook, but step it up a notch and try a non-offset circle hook. If using a popping plug for bluefish, try reducing the number of hooks on the plug. Most plugs will come with three treble hooks. Try reducing the number of treble hooks to just one or replace all three treble hooks with one J hook. The bluefish will not know the difference and neither will the angler. The three treble hooks tend to get in the way when the angler lands the fish and the hooks always find their way into either the fish or the angler's hand. When using a J hook as part of a jig head when trying to land that tide runner weakfish, cut off the barb. It will make releasing the fish a lot easier. When a fish swallows the hook, and it will happen if a person fishes enough, cut the line as close to the hook as possible and use non-stainless steel hooks that will rust over time.

Dehooking, handling, and reviving fish properly can make the difference between life and death for the fish. Having dehooking tools like pliers or a multi-tool can be beneficial for a quick return into the water. A pair of pliers in a surf bag or bucket in an easy to reach location can quickly return a striper or sea robin to the surf. Pliers in a sheath that attach to a belt allows anglers to help mates out on a boat when the fish start hitting with a fury. Pliers and

multi-tools can range in price from a few dollars to several hundred dollars.

When handling that big catch use a wet towel or at least wet hands to protect the fish's slime coat. If taking a picture with the fish, hold it horizontally with both hands underneath it to support the fish's weight to decrease the chance of internal damage. Avoid holding the fish by the gills, eyes, and tail. Use a plastic holding device that grips the lips.

After all the excitement is over and pictures are taken, it's time to release that fish. From the surf to deep sea, various techniques can be used to decrease fish mortality. If fishing from surf or kayak and the fish doesn't swim away immediately keep the fish in the water with one hand in the mouth or tail and the other hand on the belly of the fish. Allow the fish to recover for a couple of minutes. Oxygen in the water will travel over the gills and when healthy enough the fish will swim away.

Fishing for tautog or black sea bass at depths greater than 50 feet can cause the fish to have barotrauma. Barotrauma is when the reduction in atmospheric pressure causes the swim bladder to expand. Signs of barotrauma include the fish's stomach protruding from the mouth, bulging eyes, distended intestines, or a bloated stomach. The best way to reduce barotrauma is to reel in the fish slowly so it can adjust to the pressure changes, but anglers know that sometimes that is not always possible with structure or predators.

The best way to release a fish with a barotrauma is to release it at depth. This allows the fish to take advantage of the increased pressure, allowing the swim bladder to decompress. These release methods are cheap and can help lead to decreased fish mortality. A weighted milk crate or a weighted spring attached to a piece of rope will work and cost about 20 dollars and can save hundreds of fish a year.

### **Try it Yourself**

This summer, while fishing for summer flounder or any fish species, stop by your local tackle shop and pick up more fish-friendly products. Try using different hooks and sizes and record your fishing trips. Write down what fishing outfit was used, terminal tackle, bait, size of the fish, whether the fish was kept or released, if the fish swallowed the hook, fish health when released, and any other information that would be useful to you. Take the challenge and you might be surprised that new fish-friendly products might out fish the older products. Regardless of your

success or lack of success, fill out a trip report for the voluntary Recreational Angler Survey on the Division's website. Your input is important to fisheries management.

## Sources

**Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.** Washington, D.C.: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, 2003. Circle Hook Definition and Research Issues. [Link](#).

**Fishing Lines.** An Angler's Guide to Florida's Marine Resources. N.p.: Florida Fish and Wildlife, n.d. Print.

**Malchoff, Mark H., and Jon A. Lucy.** Short Term Hooking Mortality of Summer Flounder in New York and Virginia. Tech. N.p.: n.p., 1998. Print.

**Halgren, Bruce.** NJDEP Division of Fish & Wildlife - Fluke Fishing and Companionship. July, 1998. [Link](#).

**Halgren, Bruce.** NJDEP Division of Fish & Wildlife - Fluke: Facts and Fishing. August, 2004. [Link](#).

**Salierno, James, and Carl Benson.** Optimization of Hook Size in the N.J. Summer Flounder, *Paralichthys Dentatus*, Hook and Line Fishery. Rep. Fairleigh Dickinson University/ New Jersey Resident Commercial Hook and Line Fishermen, n.d. Web. 7 June 2017. [Link](#)

**The Difference Between Circle and "J" Hooks.** Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, n.d. [Link](#).

the primary contact person at the site, fishing pressures (amount of fishing activity at a site), and other information like number of parking spots, if there is a tackle shop or restaurant nearby, if there is a fuel dock, number of boat slips, and much more.

More information about the MRIP Site Register can be found [here](#).

Individuals can access the site by clicking "[Guest Login](#)".

Once I have verified my site, I check to make sure I have all of my gear with me. Each interviewer is assigned a set of gear which includes:

- A meter-long bump (measuring) board
- A measuring tape
- A knife and pliers
- Gloves
- A 5 gallon bucket
- A 12.5 kg and 2 kg Chatillon scale
- A clipboard to carry paperwork and supplies
- A fish field guide to reference in case there is a fish that is hard to identify
- A coding manual to fill out paperwork
- A field manual to reference procedures
- All of the forms that may be needed

## A Day on a Recreational Fishing Survey Site Assignment

by Elizabeth Lange, Hourly Fisheries Technician,  
Bureau of Marine Fisheries, May 23, 2017

*NOTE: This article is one in the series, A Day In the Life of a Marine Fisheries Hourly.*

I wake up early to prepare for my Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) site assignment. The survey targets recreational saltwater anglers to obtain information about their fishing effort, catch and participation in marine recreational fishing and about the demographic, social and economic characteristics of those who participate in saltwater recreational fishing in United States waters.

Before heading to my assigned site, I check the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Site Register. The site register is a tool the public can use to find almost all of the fishing access sites along the Atlantic Coast and Gulf of Mexico. Here, I find the exact location I need to be for my assignment,

After preparing for the day, I am ready to leave for my site assignment. I get to my site and find the marina office to let them know I will be there for the day. I take a look around to get an idea of how my day will go. I see how many cars there are and how many boat slips are empty, this way I have a rough estimate of how many anglers I may be surveying. I find a spot to get settled and pick a location that has a good vantage point of the whole marina so I make sure not to miss anyone coming back from a fishing trip. Then I wait. I make notes throughout the day of what the weather and tide are doing, what kind of amenities are at that site, what is going on at that site that day, and many other things. No detail is too small. If something looks like it may affect fishing at that site, I write it down.

Some days can be very slow, even a weekend day. I could be at a site on a Saturday and only survey two anglers. Other days can be extremely busy, and those days go by much faster. If some anglers I did not get a chance to talk to leave, I make a note that I counted them and that they fished. When I see some



anglers come in from a trip, I make sure to let them get settled in before I go up and talk to them. I ask how their day went and if they caught anything. I let them know I am there to conduct surveys and ask them if they would like to participate. Sometimes they say no and that's okay, it's completely voluntary. If they agree to do the survey, I get started right away.

Once I get through most of the questions, it's time to measure the fish they kept. I measure them with my bump board and take weight with a Chatillon scale. I write down all my measurements and make sure I completed the survey. I thank them for their time and wish them a good rest of the season. I go through this process until I have talked to every angler or until my assignment time comes to an end.

I go through all of my surveys for the day to make sure they are complete and legible. I finish up with some notes about the day, how the anglers responded if I had some refuse, and if there were anglers still out by the end of my time at the site. I gather up my gear and head home.

Before I submit all of my paperwork for the week, I go over it one last time to verify I have filled out the forms correctly, compile it all together and fill out a delivery summary form as a reference for other APAIS staff. There are three locations in New Jersey where APAIS interviewers can submit their paperwork, so I go to the closest one, submit my assignments for the week, and collect any forms I may be running low on to make sure I never run out while in the field. Then I'm ready for the new week.

## **Temporary Mobile Sport Fishing Vehicle Advisory Island Beach State**

Piping Plovers, an endangered species of shorebird, have nested in Island Beach State Park's Southern Natural Area. Under federal law, the Plover is listed as "threatened" and as such, IBSP is required to close this area to vehicle traffic when the eggs are expected to hatch. Consequently, on Friday, June 23, 2017, a section of beach will be temporarily closed to vehicle traffic. The vehicle barrier will be erected approximately 1200 meters (3/4 mile) north of the jetty. Foot traffic is allowed unless otherwise posted. No dogs are allowed in the closed area at any time. The NJ Division of Fish &

Wildlife has placed protective fencing around the nest to keep it safe from predators, such as seagulls and fox. The closed area is clearly marked with warning signs and posts.

Mobile Sport Fishing Vehicles (MSFVs) will be afforded the maximum amount of beach allowed by Federal Law. There will be 5.0 miles of beach still open for MSFVs. The Gillikins MSFV entrance is open and not affected by the temporary closing.

PLEASE BE ADVISED that due to the temporary closure, IBSP may reach its capacity of MSFVs sooner than normal. Should this be the case, IBSP will close to MSFVs. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring the next generation of New Jersey's shorebirds has a safe and successful start on our beach.

## **Should Big Pharma Pay for Drug Take-back Programs?**

by Ken Serrano, app.com, May 24, 2017

Abby Boxman lost her mother in 2008, due to bad health brought on by years of opioid abuse. Then came Boxman's son. After using opioids recreationally, 21-year-old Justin Boxman died of a heroin overdose in 2011.

Abby Boxman didn't just grieve. The Howell woman launched a website at [justinthebox.org](http://justinthebox.org) that educates the public on how to dispose of surplus medications properly. Her son may have taken opioids from her and her mother's homes, Boxman said. Before her son's death, Boxman knew nothing about disposal. Local drug take-back programs were just getting underway.

Now, a shift has emerged in those take-back efforts. A movement is gaining momentum across the country to have pharmaceutical companies pick up the tab for the programs, seen as a key to closing off an on-ramp to addiction and abuse.

Boxman sees wisdom in it. "Someone has to be accountable for what's going on," Boxman said. "There isn't ever accountability, there's just blame."

Advocates see the pharmaceutical industry — largely responsible for filling the nation's medicine cabinets — as best suited to keep leftover drugs from getting in the wrong hands. But Big Pharma has resisted efforts to close the supply loop — notwithstanding the toll

that opioid abuse has taken on the nation, claiming more than 33,000 lives in 2015 alone.

## Footing the bill

Since 2010, semiannual drug takeback events sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration have emptied more than 9 million pounds of unused pharmaceuticals from medicine cabinets.

The collection and incineration of unused medication around the country has also kept drugs out of landfills and from being flushed down the toilet, leading to downstream environmental harm.

Up until recently, taxpayers by and large footed the bill for such collections. Now, the pharmaceutical industry is starting to pay for those programs.

Fourteen counties, two cities and two states have passed laws mandating that the drug makers pay for collection and disposal.

“We think the manufacturers who are making big bucks have a role to play,” said Vivian Fuhrman, senior associate for policies and programs at the Product Stewardship Institute in Boston.

New Jersey has yet to follow. But the trend has already moved to the region.

Massachusetts and Vermont drafted laws last year requiring pharmaceutical companies to pay for the programs. Rockland County, in the northern suburbs of New York City, adopted a measure in April, making it the first East Coast county to join the trend.

## Tires and paint

Such product stewardship is a concept that goes beyond drugs. It places the responsibility for the end of life of products mostly on manufacturers. That strategy of environmental management is why fewer old tires turn up on the side of the road or alleys.

The rationale behind making the manufacturers pay for drug take-backs has several prongs. The most obvious one is the heroin epidemic. Some 80 percent of heroin users started on prescription drugs, illicitly or after being prescribed. While the death rate from drug overdoses soared, the opioid makers reaped billions. One company, Purdue Pharma, the maker of Oxycontin, made \$2.4 billion on opioids in 2015 alone.

Product stewardship adds a measure of responsibility to the equation. And it’s not just about opioids. Pharmaceuticals thrown into the toilet or down the drain pose other health problems.

Amy Goldsmith, state director of Clean Water Action New Jersey, which has an office in Long Branch, said sewage treatment plants dealing with toilet waste cannot remove contaminants like prescription or over-the-counter drugs. They get recycled back into drinking water with other pollutants. That could potentially harm people with compromised immune systems.

There are 94 substances that are regulated in New Jersey to keep them out of drinking water and tens of thousands, such as pharmaceuticals, that are not, she said. “Any opportunity to keep substances out of (the water), we should take,” Goldsmith said.



*Tom Fote is helping find a way to keep pharmaceuticals, particularly endocrine disruptors, out of the water. He says chemicals, especially drugs, are behind the decline in fish populations. (Photo: Doug Hood)*

Tom Fote, a disabled Vietnam War veteran who serves on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, said he’s observed the decline of fishing populations over the past 15 or more years. It is at least partly tied to pharmaceuticals making their way into the water, especially endocrine disrupters, such as birth-control medication, he said. Much of it is from excretion.

Studies, for instance, show a far greater percentage of female fish to male fish below sewerage outflow pipes worldwide, said Fote, also the legislative chairman for the Jersey Coast Anglers Association.

“We’re seeing more females and more infertile males and more males trying to produce eggs,” he said. In the past 10 years, researchers have discovered more feminized male fish in bodies of water around the world. Pharmaceuticals, particularly those that alter hormones, are suspected as the cause.

While any drug take back program will help, the pharmaceutical industry is set up to do a better job than government, Furhman said. “They have expertise in resource distribution,” she said. “They tend to be more efficient and they have a million resources at their disposal. They can cut across geographical borders, where as local efforts are slow to form into a network or share costs,” she said. Existing product-stewardship programs are too new to see how they’ve performed, she said. But they typically bring more dropoff boxes to more people while existing law-enforcement-based take-back programs remain intact.

One estimate of unused medicines in the U.S. sets the number at 3 percent to 7 percent of drug dispensed. The total spent on pharmaceuticals in the United States in 2016 was \$425 billion. So, at the low end of the estimate, \$12 billion worth of medicine in the U.S. is sitting in medicine cabinets, getting flushed or getting thrown out.

## **California first**

Alameda County in California, home to Oakland, became the first place in the country in 2012 to adopt an ordinance requiring pharmaceutical companies to pick up the cost of take-backs.

The industry, through trade groups like Pharmaceutical Researchers and Manufacturers of America (PHRMA), sued the county to stop the effort. It attempted to take the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which refused to hear the case.

An estimate that surfaced in the court case — determined by the government — set the annual cost of collection and disposal at about \$330,000. The industry countered with a \$1.2 million approximation.

A lower court judge found both figures to be minimal in light of the fact that drug makers sold about \$965 million in drugs in Alameda County.

Following the lawsuit, individual pharmaceutical companies operating in Alameda County set up a

stewardship organization, the Pharmaceutical Product Stewardship Work Group, which administers the program. It figures the breakdown of cost for each manufacturer, based on detailed industry data.

That organization has so far installed 20 kiosks in pharmacies around the county, said Bill Pollock, who manages Alameda County’s household hazardous waste program. The goal is 100 pharmacy kiosks, he said.

Boxes of the dropped-off drugs are periodically shipped to Indiana and then onward to an incinerator in Ohio, he said. Although Pollock said he has no idea how much the industry spends on the program, but figured the shipping costs of more than 1,000 60-pound boxes of drugs a year could add up.

Pollock, who was involved in the new take-back measure, used a rough estimate that other advocates rely on: a penny a pill.

His household hazardous waste sites take in about 4 million pounds of televisions, hazardous materials, and other debris a year. It costs county taxpayers nearly \$4 million a year to run it. Making manufacturers pick up the tab would shift much of that burden, ultimately back to consumers, Pollock said.

Asked if the trade group still objected to being compelled to take-back programs, spokeswoman Caitlin Carroll would not respond directly.

She touts another method for disposing of leftover drugs: putting drugs into a sealable plastic bag, mixing them with water and then cat litter, coffee or sawdust, and then throwing the bag in the garbage. She calls that “an important step” in the process.

The industry has been pushing that idea through a web site, MyOldMeds.com.

The web site includes an endorsement: “...we support community-driven drug disposal programs when they are run and managed by local law enforcement.”

Furhman, from the Product Stewardship Institute, said drug makers would pass the cost of take-backs on to consumers.

Carroll said that’s up to the individual company.

## **Local efficiency**

Ocean County has been aggressive in pursuing drug-take back programs.

The Ocean County Prosecutor's Office recently sent out 150 letters to senior citizen communities stressing that people should dispose of unused drugs during spring cleaning. Temporary drop-off bins were set up in some of them.

Nineteen police departments in Ocean County have drop-off boxes. They are available 24 hours a day.

Police officers from those departments transport the drugs to the Prosecutor's Office when they are there on other business, Ocean County Prosecutor Joseph Coronato said.

Occasionally, two workers in his office will make pickups and dispose of the collected drugs, sometimes with the help of interns, he said.

Over the past two years, the program has collected 23,000 pounds of drugs.

"You want to be effective with minimal cost," Coronato said.

But Coronato, who gained knowledge of product stewardship early in his career as a state deputy attorney general who went after chemical companies illegally dumping toxins, agrees that having the pharmaceutical industry pick up the cost is a better choice.

"It's all about accountability," he said.

Boxman sees urgency in the new legislative trend.

"We're losing so many kids," she said. "When is somebody going to take responsibility for what's going on?"

## **Traps Off the 13 Artificial Reefs in Federal Waters & 2 New Ones**

*By John Toth*

**Federal Waters** - In the JCAA's December 2016 newsletter, there was extensive coverage of the December 12th Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAMFC) meeting that voted to approve making the 13 artificial reefs in federal waters as Special Management Zones (SMZ's). This was the culmination of a hard fight by the JCAA, NJOA, NJ Federation of Sportsmen's Club working together to press the MAMFC to vote for approval of SMZ status. We are waiting for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to give its approval for the

SMZ status of these reefs. So that this approval does not fall off the radar of NMFS, I wrote a letter that went out on a JCAA letterhead to Mr. John Bullard, Northeast Regional Administrator, to approve these 13 reefs as SMZ's. If approved, and we certainly hope so, this status will remove the traps off these reefs and make fishing on them as hook & line only. Fishing this way will be free of the traps that have snared our fishing gear for so many years!

**Local Waters** - New Artificial Reef Near Manasquan Inlet - A patch of ocean bottom, 1.7 nautical miles southeast of Manasquan Inlet, will be the site of a new artificial reef for use only by recreational fishermen and divers, the state Division of Fish & Wildlife recently announced. The use of fixed commercial gear, such as traps, is excluded from this reef site.

This new reef is part of a compromise agreement reached in 2015 that settled fishing gear use and access to artificial reefs between recreational and commercial fishermen. This deal restricted commercial fishermen on placing their traps on certain sections of the Sandy Hook and Axel Carlson reefs. It also called for the construction of a new reef for recreational fishing and divers only in state waters. When fully developed, this new Manasquan Inlet reef will occupy nearly **one square mile** of seafloor in water 67 feet to 74 feet deep.

A second reef for recreational anglers and divers only is planned for the Delaware Bay located 9.2 nautical miles southwest of the mouth of Cumberland County's Maurice River and it will also be almost one square mile at depths 23 to 35 feet. Both of these two new reefs will have ships, big boulders, etc., dumped on them at various time intervals. It will take approximately 10 years for them to become completely built out.

The JCAA, New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) and other clubs and associations worked very hard to make this all happen by first restricting commercial traps at the Sandy Hook and Axel Carlson reefs. To accomplish this, we wrote letters and post cards, attended meetings, made phone calls, sent emails and even held a demonstration by the office of an Assemblyman who was blocking this effort. It took almost 10 years to remove most of the commercial traps off the Sandy Hook and Axel Carlson reefs, but we will have two new reefs built for our exclusive use with no commercial traps allowed on them. A long and hard struggle that paid off for us in the long run!

In regard to fishing management issues, it takes tenacity since resolution to fishing issues move at glacial speed. But with this one, tenacity made this win possible.

Below is the letter that I sent to John Bullard, the Northeast Regional Administrator.

*Mr. John Bullard, Northeast Regional Administrator  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester MA. 01930*

*Dear John,*

*At the December 2016 MAMFC meeting, this Council voted to recommend that the National Marine Fisheries Service designate the 13 artificial reefs in federal waters off the coast of New Jersey as year-round special management zones (SMZs).*

*This would allow access to all anglers who use hook & line to catch fish and not get their gear hung up on traps and other obstacles. We are looking forward to using these reefs without the problems that recreational anglers have been experiencing for such a long time.*

*Please let us know the status of this SMZ designation and the timetable for its completion. Thank you for your attention to this matter.*

*John Toth*

*President, Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA)*

*President, New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA)*

*President, Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County (SWABC)*

## JCAA High Roller Raffle 2017

*By Don Marantz*

The High Roller Raffle drawing took place in our office on May 30<sup>th</sup> and the following are the list of winners and the prizes won:

**1 – Pat Sheehan** – Jersey Nutz Six Man Charter (6 hour striped bass weekday charter) **\$850.**

*Donated by Capt. Robert Melton Jr.*

**2 – Steve Soltis** – \$500. Gift Certificate from Fisherman's Headquarters **\$500.**

*Donated by Fisherman's Headquarters*

**3 – Matt Rummler** – 6'6" Shimano Terez T2C-66H-EG Spinning rod /Saltist 5000H reel **\$500.**

*Donated by Grumpys Tackle*

**4 – Brian Kocsis** – Tony Maja Wire Line rod/Penn 113H2SP reel **\$370.**

*Donated by Tony Maja and JCAA*

**5 – Bruce Homan** – 12' Tica UEHA936502S Surf rod/Tica Abyss TL5000R spinning reel **\$310.**

*Donated by Tica*

**6 – Tony Sabatino** – 7' Star Stellar Lite SG102FT70G Spinning rod/Canyon DJR3500 reel **\$240.**

*Donated by Star Fishing Tackle and Canyon Reels*

**7 – Mark Goehring** – 7' Tica WISA70H1 Conventional rod/Tica Caiman GT200 reel **\$225.**

*Donated by Tica*

**8 – Rob Benzinger** – 6' 6" Tica WISA66H Conventional rod / Tica Caiman WC205 reel **\$200.**

*Donated by Tica*

Thank you to all who participated for making the fundraiser a success and supporting JCAA.

## Youth Education Report

*By Greg Kucharewski*

### GOVERNOR'S SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT

Many thanks to World Jeep and the volunteers that transported disabled anglers from the pavilion area to the beach and assisted anglers with fishing.

This tournament offers more opportunity for family and youth fishing. This was the first year tournament promoters decided to incorporate high school and NJ HOFNOD group fishing teams. The new youth group divisions worked out great and participation was more than expected.



*Disabled anglers enjoyed a day on the beach during the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament.*

## 2017 JCAA YOUTH EDUCATION AWARD

The JCAA Youth Education Committee is accepting nominations for the 2017 Youth Education Award. There are many NJ HOFNOD volunteers doing great work to bring successes to the fishing community but sometimes individuals and sport-fishing organizations go above and beyond to make the future of fishing better for our youngsters.

Youth Education Award Criteria: Promoting “Hooked On Fishing Not On Drugs (HOFNOD),” Certified HOFNOD instructors, number of fishing or aquatic education events, JCAA lending library usage, and creativity for promoting youth fishing events. Submit your nominations in writing and email to [Gkucharews@jcaa.org](mailto:Gkucharews@jcaa.org) or bring your nomination to the next JCAA general membership meeting.

## 2017 NJ HOFNOD YOUTH FISHING CHALLENGE

The Hooked on Fishing-Not on Drugs Program's Youth Fishing Challenge was a great success. Fifteen counties in New Jersey participated in the NJ HOFNOD Youth Fishing Challenge. According to Liz Jackson, NJ DEP, Division of Fish and Wildlife, Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs Coordinator, the statewide event was very successful and got youngsters and their families out fishing.

If you would like to volunteer and become a certified instructor, the next instructor training is scheduled for October 2017. Contact Liz Jackson for details. NJ DEP Division of Fish & Wildlife, Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs, 605 Pequest Road, Oxford, NJ 07683, 908-637-4125 x122, [website](#).

## DISABLED YOUTH FISHING OPPORTUNITY

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association's Youth Education Committee will partner with Cardinale Enterprises LLC to coordinate a disabled youth fishing fun day and barbeque. The fishing fun day and BBQ is currently in the working group planning stages and will be scheduled for late September or early October 2017.

The free fishing fun day for disabled children will be held at Lake Julianna, located in Millstone Township, NJ. Lake Julianna holds plenty of big fish and was recently utilized this past April by disabled veterans that participated in a “Play HOOK-e from PTSD” fishing event and BBQ. The JCAA extends its thanks and appreciation to Vito Cardinale

for his hospitality and generous donation of use of his property and supplying all the food and necessities for the day.



*Disabled Combat Veteran “Mic” caught and released a 4 ½ pound Large Mouth Bass. Photo by Tim Burden, NJBBA.*

If you would like to donate prizes or volunteer time to help out with this worthwhile event, please phone Don Marantz 908-347-1434 or Greg Kucharewski at 732-785-9278.

## BERKELY STRIPER CLUB SUMMER FISHING EVENT

The Berkeley Striper Club's Youth Education Program is sponsoring a Summer Fishing Fun event in the Island Beach area. Their event runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day. During that time anyone from 14 yrs old and under who weighs a fish or brings in a crab to the Dock Outfitters, Grumpies or Betty and Nick's will be given a goodie bag.

They also will be eligible for a rod and reel or a crabbing outfit if their fish is the largest of the shop they weigh it at. Look for the flyers at any of participating tackle shops for the rules. Species include: Striped Bass, Bluefish, Fluke, Weakfish and Blue Claw crab.