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Sherry Dollar made her first-ever wade fishing trip with husband Steve and Danny and Terri McGuire on the flats of San Antonio Bay. Her smile says it all. Terri helped with the netting chores. Check out the video of the landing by activating the QR code.

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TEXAS SALTWATER FISHING MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL
EVERETT JOHNSON

CELEBRATING THE CHANGE OF SEASONS

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October Issue Highlights

Few things stir the interest of outdoors enthusiasts like the change of seasons. Spring is remarkable in many ways but the coming of fall, with all its options, is my favorite by far. Fishing turns on like somebody threw a light switch and, if your interests include hunting, October has no equal.

Let's start with the fishing. Late summer doldrums affect fish every bit as much as fishermen, and by now we've all had enough of hundred-degree days. The change of seasons includes two major influences that kickstart the action – shorter hours of daylight and booming fall tides. The activity level of baitfish and gamefish becomes instantly noticeable as feeding periods occur more frequently and last longer. Anglers, too, display new vigor when afternoon highs remain mostly in the eighties.

Over on the hunting side; if the whistling of duck wings and yodeling of the first flights of specklebelly geese do not raise the hair on your neck, you might need a blood transfusion. And the deer. The rut comes early along the coast. Suddenly emboldened by the urge to breed, normally secretive white-tail bucks are out and about in broad daylight all across the coastal plains. And doves. My favorite early fall pastime is a morning wade fishing session followed by an afternoon trip to the dove fields.

So, amid all this wonderful outdoor opportunity and excellent weather, it occurs that October might be the greatest month for getting family and friends involved in your coastal activities. Our late friend, Dickie Colburn, encouraged taking youngsters fishing more than perhaps anybody I ever met. He was a truly a leader in this regard, taking youngsters fishing on his days off and donating fishing gear to some who were disadvantaged. Like Dickie, I would also emphasize getting adults who have never fished or hunted involved in the outdoors as well. The experience can be life-changing, especially for any who might be struggling with personal problems.

On another note; if reports from the water are any indication, it is growing increasingly evident that the spotted seatrout fishery along the Middle and Lower Texas coast is showing positive signs of recovery. Some areas are thriving more than others but the trend seems to be generally positive overall. While some had doubts when TPWD enacted reduced bag limits and a tight length slot to conserve biomass and enhance recruitment; I would have to say the measures have been effective…even if the majority of the evidence is only anecdotal thus far. As you read what our writers have to say in this issue you might be inclined to agree.

October is a great month; get outdoors and enjoy it!

Everett Johnson

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Guidelines for Early Fall Fishing

STORY BY STEVE HILLMAN

Gulls working over trout and redfish gorging on migrating white shrimp will be a common sight for the next couple of months.

It's certainly been a long and windy summer. I can't begin to describe my anticipation of our first cool front. Hopefully by the time this fine publication arrives in your mailbox we will have had several. The wind never really stopped blowing this summer like we're typically accustomed to. Not only did it blow most days but it seemed all too often from the southwest. Most folks who spend any time on the Texas Coast know that this isn't always the best wind direction for fishing success. While me and my crews were certainly able to make the best of it I'm more than ready to see some easterly flows.

There's something about that cool morning air that just rejuvenates us. I've always noticed how everyone I talk to on the day of that first cool front is in a chipper mood and has that little extra jump in their step. It's funny how Mother Nature knows how to reward us with weather changes right when we need them the most. Cooler days on the water means that I probably fish a little harder and stay a bit more focused than I was after fishing for weeks on end under a hot summer sun. It's not just us who get energized by the magic of fall; the fish we target seem to be more energized as well.

Ancil Mitchell with a solid trout he tricked on a Chartreuse / Silver Glitter Saltwater Assassin in "trout green" water on a sunny morning.

Mark Slater caught this solid red while casting to mud boils near a bayou drain.

For months our salinity levels have been extremely high throughout the Galveston Bay Complex. This has allowed our trout to spread out over many different areas of the bay, sometimes making them a little more difficult to find. As we ease into fall our trout will once again concentrate similarly to what they do during late spring. As a matter of fact, many of the areas we catch them during April and May will be productive during October. Just as brown shrimp migrate out of bayous, rivers and back bays in the spring, white shrimp do the same thing in the fall. With each passing front shrimp, shad, and other forage species will pump out of these areas. As this happens trout, redfish and flounder will gravitate to these funnel points making them easier to target.

High winds are often associated with passing fronts and they're generally out of the northeast. This is especially true with the weaker fronts. We typically don't experience those stronger northwesterly flows until later into the fall and on into winter. While a northeast wind can wreak havoc on most of our summertime fishing areas it actually doesn't pose much of a problem during October and even on into November because many of the bayou drains and river mouths we target are protected on such wind direction.

Fish will continue to form tighter schools and feed more and more aggressively with each front. The more they feed the more they'll regurgitate. This will create more slicks which obviously gives us a huge advantage when zeroing in on the schools. Soft plastics are always a safe bet but the topwater bite can be phenomenal this time of year as trout and reds go into frontal-induced feeding frenzies.

MirrOlure Provokers and Saltwater Assassins are our go-to soft plastics while my list of topwater choices includes quite a bit more variation based upon a number of factors. If the water's surface is calm and I'm casting into concentrations of small shad then my topwater choice will likely be a MirrOlure Top Dog Jr., Super Spook Jr., or a Baby Skitter Walk. Color isn't as important as size, body profile, and pitch, in my opinion. When there is a slight chop on the surface my favorites are MirrOlure Top Dogs, Rapala Skitter Walks and Super Spook One Knockers. The windy days usually call for louder pitched baits with bigger profiles. There's no better topwater plug for this scenario than a MirrOlure She Dog. A full-sized Super Spook runs a close second but doesn't quite offer the resonating deep pitch of that of the She Dog.

The Rapala Holographic Silver Skitter Walk can be a very effective bait in clear water and low light conditions.

Kent Lamonte had himself a post-frontal field day catching trout out of concentrations of button shad near the mouth of a back lake.

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Steve Mistretta had an action-packed day recently chunking MirrOlure Provokers!

Sterling Mistretta wasn't about to let his grandpa beat him!

I mentioned that color isn't as important as size and vibration but that doesn't mean that color should be discounted. Some of the same general rules that apply to choosing the right color soft plastic also can be followed when picking out which topwater to throw. I've always lived by the whole contrast (silhouette) concept when making color choices of soft plastics. If the water is murky then I throw darker colors like Red Shad, Texas Roach, and Morning Glory. I've tricked many good trout on a solid black Super Spook in muddy water and while wading in the dark. Water with good visibility warrants worm colors like Glow, Chartreuse, and Salt and Pepper. Pink, Bone and Chartreuse topwaters would fit the bill in this case. But water clarity alone isn't the ultimate determining factor when choosing the right color. For instance, if the water is "trout green" but it's early morning light or overcast skies, then darker shades work great! All of this being said, Plum seems to be universal.

Whether we're wading scattered oyster reefs near bayou drains, drifting open water slicks or working birds over migrating white shrimp – it's very important that we handle the trout we catch and release responsibly. We will catch a lot of undersized (less than 15 inches) trout here in the Galveston Bay Complex this fall. With the freeze-induced emergency size requirements and limits (17-23 inches and 3 per angler) currently in place (until August 31, 2023) from FM 457 in Sargent south all the way to Brownsville, there will be even more throwbacks than usual caught.

Here's a very simple list of things I highly recommend to greatly increase the survival rate of released trout:

Crimp barbs down on jig heads.

Do not bring them into the boat and let them flop around on the deck before releasing.

Use a Boga Grip or wet hand to grab them. DO NOT USE A TOWEL!

Wet down your Check-It-Stick or whatever measuring device you're using before placing a fish on it.

If you have a photo-worthy trout leave it in the water preferably using a Boga Grip. Gently swim the trout forward in a figure eight or circular motion to keep water moving through its gills until you're ready to lift it for a couple of quick photos.

Avoid stringing trout you plan to release.

If you're wading or drifting an area that's producing predominantly undersized trout, leaving the area to find larger fish may be necessary.

I have to say that I was pleased with one thing in particular I witnessed all summer with the trout we caught here in Galveston Bay. Salinity levels and an abundance of forage (mainly shad from what I could tell) have kept our trout's roe sacks continuously full. Six months (April through September) of prolific spawning will bode well for our future. In addition, many of the guides and recreational anglers from Galveston to Port Isabel have been practicing 100-percent catch and release since the February 2021 freeze. Some were actually doing it long before the freeze. It will take some time but I believe several pieces are currently in place to improve our trout fishery. I also believe there will always be more work to be done. In the meantime, come on cooler weather and get ready for some fall fishing!

View The Video

Open Camera and hover over QR Code. When link appears at top of screen tap to open in YouTube.

River Monster vs Waterloo Salinity

CONTACT STEVE HILLMAN

Steve Hillman is a full-time fishing guide on his home waters of Galveston Bay. Steve fishes the entire Galveston Bay Complex, wading and drifting for trout, redfish, and flounder using artificial lures.

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STRUCTURES & SIGNS

STORY BY KEVIN COCHRAN

While competing in tournaments from one end of the Texas Coast to the other, I learned many things, one of which relates to how anglers attempting to achieve consistent productivity need variable strategies and methods for different types of bays and waterways. At a basic level, the presence or absence of large rivers defines our state's bays. On the Upper Coast, several mighty rivers regularly dump copious amounts of freshwater into bays studded with oyster reefs. On the Lower Coast, a few trickling streams send scant amounts of freshwater into estuaries largely devoid of oysters, with bottoms covered mostly by seagrass beds.

This basic difference becomes part of a more complex puzzle when one considers the depths of the water and proximity to passes connecting the bays to the open Gulf. Generally, the deeper bays on the Upper Coast experience stronger influence from tide movements generated by water flowing through numerous dredged channels and passes which connect them to the ocean, but in the vast, shallow expanses of water way down south, many miles separate passes connecting bays to the Gulf. Collectively, these differences combine to create disparate realities with regard to the optimal ways to target trout and redfish in riverine Upper Coast bays and hypersaline Lower Coast estuaries, using a dividing line around the southern fringe of Corpus Christi Bay, near the JFK Causeway.

As a starting point, one might describe the difference in the following way—on the Upper Coast, targeting fish around specific parts of structural elements and considering the strength and direction of tide movements works best, but on the Lower Coast, targeting fish wherever signs indicate the presence of feeding activity works better. Upper Coast bays demand anglers to have intimate familiarity with spots and tide cycles, but Lower Coast bays favor folks with high levels of observation skills related to signs of life. These generalizations become readily apparent to someone like me who learned to fish in a highly spot and structure dependent bay system, then moved to a place where fish roam around more randomly, elevating the need for sign-reading skills.

Many of us who participated in Troutmasters events from Sabine Lake to the Land Cut quickly learned it's easier to transition from fishing bays where knowledge of spots and structures reigns supreme to bays where fish move more randomly than to go in the opposite direction. This statement rings true partly because the water in the bays south of the JFK Causeway runs clearer more of the time than the water in the bays north of that line, allowing anglers not only to see the layout of the bottom, but also facilitating their efforts to locate schools of predators and the prey on which they feed.

All reasonably accomplished anglers develop skills in both these areas, meaning they can identify consistently productive spots on structures where fish bite most often and also interpret signs indicating what's happening close around them. So, an Upper Coast angler with intimate knowledge of when and how to target fish around reefs, jetties and sloughs can learn to read the water and signs down south fairly quickly. But, when a Lower Coast angler moves into bays like Sabine, Trinity, East Galveston, East Matagorda, Nueces and others, where turbidity levels run high most of the time, and where microspots produce best in specific circumstances related to tide movements, the development of consistently productive plans takes more time.

I heard this repeatedly from anglers who became guides in places like Galveston and Matagorda, then ventured down south with their customers, usually in search of more big trout. "You've got to learn to locate fish using signs down here," they'd say. "You can't just rely on arriving at a spot on a reliable reef at the right time and expect to catch fish like you can up north." As someone who experienced such an evolution in my own fishing life, I agree with those people wholeheartedly. I can also see how anglers accustomed to finding fish using signs on the Lower Coast would initially struggle up north, operating in generally murky water, without extensive knowledge of the topography of the structures.

This issue becomes more complex when considered more thoughtfully. The disparate realities related to trying to catch fish by relying on spots versus trying to catch them using signs exert influence in all our coastal waters, at all times. All our bays have parts with structures and sweet spots, and all have parts which basically lack those same features. In order to optimally adjust angling efforts over time, one must first learn to identify which places within each bay lend themselves to spot fishing, and which lend themselves to reliance on signs.

In general, a place which necessitates fishing spots and timing the efforts to coincide with moving water has more variety in its features than a spot which requires reliance on signs. Areas with homogeneous features provide few clues about where fish would likely feed, or even

Jason King with a beautiful thirty-inch trout caught in October a few years ago.

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where they'll be at a given time. Places like this include deep basins, vast flats and long stretches of ditches, like the intracoastal waterway. All these places include large expanses of water of relatively consistent depth, with similar features spread out over a long range.

Conversely, places like oyster reefs, jetty systems, sand bars, spoil banks, drains on a shoreline and drop offs at the edges of flats have water of variable depths and various cover elements on the bottom in close proximity to each other. This variability basically defines the sweet spots, especially when water moving around these structure and cover elements generates advantages for predatory fish in their hunting expeditions. These simple definitions become less clear when one considers the precise location of the place, and its proximity to a strong source of tide movements.

The Captain with a fat trout caught on an Ocober wading session.

Certainly, the basin of Baffin Bay is not the same as the basin of Sabine Lake. The water in Baffin moves much less frequently and forcefully than the water in Sabine, creating different realities for anglers trying to catch fish in those places. Similarly, the Tide Gauge Bar in Baffin differs radically from Community Bar in West Matagorda Bay, because of the same influence. Also, the intracoastal waterway in the Land Cut differs from stretches of the ditch on the Upper Coast where water moves more regularly and with greater strength than in a location so far from a pass connecting inshore waters to the Gulf.

Further complicating the issue is the fact most stretches of water, even those with mostly homogeneous depths and bottom features, do in fact hold sweet spots. A small, isolated reef somewhere in the middle of Trinity Bay definitely holds higher potential than surrounding areas, especially during particular parts of the tide cycle, but finding such a feature in a vast expanse of water can prove difficult, even impossible, for the average angler. Similarly, parts of the edge in the Land Cut have secondary ledges which hold fish more often than other stretches, but locating them can prove tedious, at best.

On the other hand, most anglers can identify specific rocks which create higher potential for catching on any jetty they regularly fish, also parts of rock formations in Baffin which produce more bites than others, despite the regular influence of tide movements at the jetty and the lack of moving water on the rocks in Baffin. Anglers should consider these facts when formulating strategies before heading out to fish, and within a given day of effort.

First, anglers should acknowledge the type of area to which they're heading and the type of day they expect to have. If fishing deep, open water, or on a vast, shallow flat, where sweet spots prove difficult to find, they'd expect to search hard for signs of feeding activity from the onset of the effort, but if they're heading to a jetty or reef influenced by strong tides, they'd expect to operate in precise locations and time the effort to coincide with specific parts of the tide cycle, paying close attention to charts, and relying on past experiences. In places where fishing spots on structures reigns supreme most often, setting up in specific places and casting and retrieving lures considering the direction of the current strongly affect the productivity of efforts.

In basins or on large flats, spending time covering water in a search for signs of life makes much more sense than trying to figure out exactly where to stop and/or stand and in which direction to make each cast. Once the angler locates fish in a place largely devoid of structures and sweet spots, these factors might become quite important, of course, but they should not hold priority until that time. These ideas relate to how one should formulate basic plans, with consideration of the type of area and expected type of day, possibly including the predicted tide cycles, wind speed and direction, and water quality.

During a given day, things usually change. For instance, once an angler catches a bunch of fish in a familiar hot spot on a reef in East Galveston Bay early in the day, during the peak of a tide movement, the action often wanes. Then, in order to keep catching, one might benefit from consciously making a move into an area without much structure and looking for signs to find more fish. On the other hand, someone who starts off searching for fish on an expansive flat in the Lower Laguna Madre and catches plenty under rafts of nervous mullet in clear water might head to an area with murkier water, or close to a pass like the East Cut, to fish microspots covered by moving water of different depths later in the day.

View The Video

Open Camera and hover over QR Code. When link appears at top of screen tap to open in YouTube.

A Simple Chart for a Complex Topic

KEVIN COCHRAN

CONTACT

Kevin Cochran is a long-time fishing guide at Corpus Christi (Padre Island), TX. Kevin is a speckled trout fanatic and has created several books and dvds on the subject. Kevin's home waters stretch from Corpus Christi Bay to the Land Cut.

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Jigging with small lures and light tackle doesn't always mean small fish.

THE TUG IS THE DRUG

STORY BY CHUCK UZZLE

I just got thumped. I just got crushed. That fish absolutely smoked it. Wow, did you see that blow up? That one hit like a freight train. I could go on but you get the point. Exclamations such as these are used to describe the feeling we get when we make contact with a fish. We all have our own description or phrase that we use to drive home the point when a strike happens or when a fish makes a move to rid itself of a jig or plug. I enjoy being in the company of other fishermen and listening to the descriptions that are used and watching how animated most of those conversations become; it's one of the very cool things about our sport. I heard a phrase recently from one of my buddies, Nic Dragomire, who resides and fishes in Mexico, that absolutely sums all of this up for me, "The Tug is the Drug." I couldn't have said it any better or agree any more, it all boils down to that feeling and it's exactly what keeps us coming back for more.

In recent years we have become so incredibly efficient at catching fish that it almost seems like part of the whole process has been left behind. Incredibly sensitive fishing rods adorned with highly advanced reels spooled to the gills with space-age fishing lines in some way take the drama out of the catch. As long as you hook your fish your odds of landing it are pretty dang good, unless you have some operator error or other misfortune. Seldom now do we ever take to the bay and show up undergunned. By that I mean using the lightest gear possible in order to maximize the fight. There are few things cooler than catching a big fish on tackle designed for smaller fish, the level of skill required to properly fight and land that fish are vanishing skills that few anglers see as important anymore. It's a shame that more folks don't attempt using lighter gear because it amplifies every fish you catch to the point of feeling like an accomplishment, especially if it turns out to be a really big fish.

For years I stood on the boat with my friend and mentor Dickie Colburn while we combed the shorelines of Sabine Lake for flounder. Dickie was a huge proponent of the spinning rod for such a program because he liked the light line presentation that it offered as well as the sensitivity needed to detect the subtle strikes. On numerous occasions that subtle bite turned into an oversized redfish and our fishing trip turned into a rodeo as line left his reel at an alarming pace. We would laugh at the situation and chase the fish until we could get the upper hand on it and bring it into the net. Each one of those big fish would produce a huge smile and a sense of accomplishment for taming it with such light gear.

Over the years I have developed an affinity for chasing fish with tackle properly suited for the species in order to maximize the experience and that has lead to

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some epic battles. For instance, during the summer months we get all sorts of fish showing up farther inland than most would realize and they make for great fun. Croaker, small black drum, and sand trout are tops on the list and are usually very prevalent for those who know where to look. A micro-sized spinning rod of 4.5 to 5 feet paired with a reel spooled with 4-6 pound test, a split shot and small piece of shrimp, squid, or tiny plastic jig and you have yourself a recipe for fun. At some point during each one these trips someone will encounter a slot-sized redfish or solid trout and you would think a 1000 pound blue marlin had taken the bait. This program is so much fun and a welcome change of pace; it gives you a new appreciation for some things and adds another dimension to your time on the water. Once you try this style you'll be surprised how many more times you go back to it…just because.

Now don't get me wrong, I understand that folks are pressed for time and feel the need to make their time on the water as productive as they can. Guides, party boats, offshore charters will all usually have their clients using larger than necessary tackle to help out with the hook up to catch ratio and I have no problem with that, everyone wants to be successful and numbers drive the market. But for a moment lets just say we don't have to use the big gear and can just fish for sport, can you imagine how much fun that can be?

I have taken this approach, using the lighter gear, on many trips to places in Mexico and it's an absolute riot! Once you assure the guides that you are happy they will usually let their guard down and enjoy watching you get your tail kicked. Recently we were swarmed with skipjack tuna and they put up a great fight for their size in deep water, that's for sure. I opted for a heavy action travel rod from Fishing Tackle Unlimited and a wide frame Okuma Citrix just to see what would happen and it was like trying to grab a truck going by at 60 mph! I had an absolute ball trying to whip those fish with basically heavy largemouth bass tackle. It doesn't take many of those to drive the point home as to how much fun those fish are when the odds are not so stacked so heavily in your favor.

I know that some will read this column and never give in to using smaller gear or lures and that's fine, to each their own. I have witnessed on several occasions how offshore fish as big as tuna will eat tiny jigs or how oversized redfish will inhale miniscule topwater plugs. Smaller baits don't necessarily mean smaller fish and smaller tackle can be as much fun as you could ever hope for. Downsize your tackle and upsize your experience because like Nic says. "The Tug is the Drug.

Tiny ballerina jigs take big fish like tuna and wahoo on a regular basis.

Capt. Alex and Greg Guillotte with a solid tuna that ate a ballerina jig.

View The Video

Open Camera and hover over QR Code. When link appears at top of screen tap to open in YouTube.

Sabine Fishing Opportunity Abounds In October

CONTACT

CHUCK UZZLE

Chuck fishes Sabine and Calcasieu Lakes from his home in Orange, TX. His specialties are light tackle and fly fishing for trout, reds, and flounder.

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Pete Churton and Dale Fontenot from the Beaumont area battling fish near a shrimpboat that chummed by dumping its bycatch.

Chumming

STORY BY JOE RICHARD

Every autumn we look forward to stocking the freezer with fat, autumn Spanish mackerel, a fish easy to chum close to the boat where they can be caught with short casts. My great uncle used that trick many years ago, using red label cans of jack mackerel that could be squeezed and flung upwind as he drifted along. This got me to thinking lately about chumming in general, when to use it, and when not to. Over the years we've chummed here and there to good effect, even in tournaments.

First, you need what they call biomass to chum. That means a few pounds of fish, sometimes sweetened with pogey oil, which is menhaden. Maybe add some oatmeal, to thicken the mixture. Ground up fish chum can be bought in frozen, five-gallon blocks, slipped into a mesh bag and hung over the side. This works great for mackerel, if you're drifting off the end of the jetties in nice weather and green water. Or tied up to a near-shore oil rig. If you Google "chum" a host of modern chum products will appear.

Frozen chum blocks bought at marinas are commonly used offshore, hung over the side in mesh bags. Or placed in pinfish traps and checked 24 hours later. I've seen hundreds of pinfish poured from those traps, soon used as live bait for mutton snapper and grouper. (This was at Marathon in the Florida Keys, also at POC for red snapper). Guides in the upper Keys anchor on the edge of a grass channels, tossing the chum block overboard, where they wait until the water astern is flashing with pinfish and pilchards, before throwing the castnet. Same thing at reefs on the ocean side of the Keys, except it was balao "bally-hoo" used for sailfish. Yank that bag a few times, and it releases fine fish particles that drift back in the current. Those same particles may interest gamefish, but the pieces are too small to feed them.

Even shrimp can be chummed. We used to drop chunks of canned, Ken-L-Ration dog food along the seawall at Port Arthur's Pleasure Island, marking each spot with a small rock. Wait 10 minutes, toss the net, and a bunch of white shrimp came up kicking in the mesh.

Shrimpboats were always our favorite source of chum. It was always interesting to board a shrimpboat or pull alongside, trading a bucket or two of chum for cheap beer. The brand didn't matter. One tough-looking woman, her shrimpboat anchored a few miles off Galveston, traded us a 20-pound bag of jumbo shrimp tails, also chum, for a dusty bottle of EverClear. And didn't mind sampling it three hours before lunch. (We were guests aboard a 42-Hatteras that had a small liquor cabinet). Her shrimpboat was shoveling chum overboard, within sight of town, but the boat's only customers were blacktip sharks and large jacks. We landed several and promptly headed further offshore to blue water.

Chum bag on bottom, attracting baitfish.

Aboard each shrimpboat, sooner or later, is a mound of dead sea life, fish and crabs of many species. (If a fleet of shrimpboats is anchored out there, aim for those who left their running lights on, they've often been there longer than the others). We'd save big ribbonfish for bait, and everything else went in the chum buckets. Even after being iced down, a three-day summer tournament had that stuff a little ripe. I wore a glove that turned black, after patiently cutting small fish into chum "chunks." While anchored at one snapper rock, after chumming for hours, a handful of big kings finally showed up and on that third day in that small boat, we won the big prize. Our biggest king weighed 49 pounds after eating a big, limp ribbonfish saved from the chum pile.

Spraying liquid chum (pogy oil) in the Florida Keys.

Not everyone wants to approach a shrimpboat and wave an empty bucket, especially in offshore waves. If not, try a shrimpboat in the bays, or quiet Galveston harbor on summer mornings. Or bribe one of the marina shrimpboats netting croakers in Matagorda Bay. They'll probably fill a 5-gallon bucket or two with multiple species for *dinero*. Money talks. And we know the rest of that phrase, don't we?

Out there in the Gulf your luck can run out fast, but a few years came and went. (With apologies to Steve Earl.) We had lots of adventures out there. Sixty miles out, we found a shrimpboat anchored with the crew asleep, an acre of sea life surrounding us. Countless schoolie kingfish, though nothing over 20 pounds. Lots of bonito, and also a bunch of big, yellow sharks from eight to 10 feet long. And ling, too. We caught about 10, but had neglected to get into the ling (money) pot in the tournament because they're so hit and miss. Some were twice as big as that weekend's winner. The shrimpboat must have dumped a ton of chum, calling up fish for miles around, because they wore us out. At mid-day I woke up in front of the center console, laying on deck, wearing bloody gloves.

Chumming can also go too far. I've seen guys haul two garbage cans of shrimpboat cull out there, tie up to an

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oil rig and shovel it overboard all day, attracting sharks from near and far. They never did catch a decent king that weekend. In the following years we learned to be more specific, stopped chumming for big kings, instead slow-trolling baits in clean water. No more sharks, either.

We've had big fun chumming over snapper rocks, using small "peanut" menhaden, the size you catch in Galveston canals in August-September at night. Fill a 5-gallon bucket, ice them down, and watch what happens when they're flung behind an anchored boat in 90-foot depths. Even the snapper came up; I have this distinct memory of a red snapper's dorsal fin breaking the surface, back-lit by the setting sun. Even more fun was tossing topwater trout plugs out there on Ambassadeur 6500 reels: kingfish would skyrocket repeatedly before grabbing on. The fight was on, but there was a down side: Unhooking treble hooks from snapping kingfish isn't much fun, requiring channel locks to quickly pry those hooks loose. So, we removed the treble hooks and kept casting. A king would jump 10 feet high with the plug and take off, ripping 20-pound line off the reel. Only to drop the plug, whereby another king grabbed on. In this way we had multiple runs on single casts. Kingfish are crazy about those small menhaden, even those that floated. The action went on even at mid-day until we ran out of chum.

Inshore, there are guides who anchor up about 30 yards from their favorite shallow oyster reef. They carry a hollow, plastic baseball bat, which is stuffed with chopped up baitfish. They rare back and "swing for the fence" and deliver a scattering of morsels way out there, often right on top of the reef at high or mid-tide. This turns on any redfish or even black drum, and the action is on. The water has to be too shallow for catfish, however. (Don't try it in deeper Galveston Bay with its gafftops and TR hardheads). This winter I'm going to find my own plastic bat and try it after our local hardhead cats are gone, because my redfish spots in five feet of water are bedeviled by big, black hardheads that usually show up late for bait but when they do, the party is over. Same with stingrays, you don't want to chum big ones into your spot. Both undesirable species grow scarce from November-March in many areas, which is a blessing.

Another shallow-water fish we've chummed up is the black drum. Bigger drum crave blue crabs, and so while prepping choice crab parts, I always sling the top shell as close to the strike zone as possible, followed by claws crushed by pliers. Puppy drum prefer shrimp, of course.

Ideal sheepshead chum would be busted barnacles from pilings; guys have been scraping that hard growth with shovels and other tools for years now. They scrape away, right above those piling-hugging sheepshead, and the tasty chunks drop straight down to the fish.

Closeup of shrimpboat bycatch. Much sea life is wasted, to catch each shrimp. Great chum, however.

Boarding a shrimpboat in the Bolivar Pocket. Easy work from a johnboat. Mike Spencer from Port Arthur has climbed aboard.

CONTACT

JOE RICHARD

Joe Richard has fished the Gulf since 1967, starting out of Port Arthur, but his adventures have taken him up and down the entire coast.

He was the editor of Tide magazine for eight years, and later Florida Sportsman's book and assistant magazine editor. He began guiding out of Port O'Connor in 1994. His specialty is big kingfish, and his latest book is The Kingfish Bible, New Revelations. Available at Seafavorites.com

JETTY JIGGING!

STORY & PHOTOS BY TSFMAG EDITORIAL STAFF & DANNY MCGUIRE

Double hookups are common – Sherry and Steve Dollar had several this day.

Maybe it's a long career finally catching up; lately it seems my get up and go has done got up and went. What I'm talking about is my desire to make all-day wades on the flats in sweltering summer heat. Oh, I can still hang strong as ever when the water is running shirt-pocket-deep – great way to keep cool. But knee-deep for hours under blistering sun is no longer as appealing as it used to be. Unless, of course, the bites are frequent and the quality of the fish better than average.

Another double, this one for Danny McGuire and Brooks Truly.

Everett Johnson and Jason Shive enjoyed three doubles in quick succession.

Josh Shive with daughter Jayden and son Jetson. The kids were excited watching Daddy reel them in.

Anglers of all ages can get in on the action.

Lawson Merworth struggled but was up to the challenge in landing this hefty jack crevalle.

So, how can a diehard angler continue to feed his habit when the daily highs are crowding the century mark? Some hit the water just as the sun cracks the eastern horizon, spending only a few hours, and then possibly venturing out again toward sunset. This is a completely workable strategy but does not always align with favorable tide movements or solunar feeding periods. Fish on the flats don't seem to like this kind of weather any more than we do. Success is too often hit or miss to justify the grind.

Our strategy over the past several years for beating the summertime heat has evolved toward taking advantage of a whole other set of opportunities. We call it jetty jigging.

Spro Bucktails in bright colors attract lots of strikes!

Our targeted species are primarily bull redfish and feisty jack cravelle, not to rule out occasional encounters with king mackerel, or highly-coveted cobia. Some lucky anglers might even hook a tarpon, although landing one borders on impossible given the type of lures and rigging we typically use.

The best times for this type of sport coincide with new and full moon periods, when early morning incoming tides reach peak flows – the currents on in-between moons simply aren't strong enough to ignite frenzy feeding. The action can be incredible as the bulls and jacks feed voraciously on a variety of baitfish – mullet, ribbonfish, and shad, mostly. Feeding frenzies erupt frequently as predators

The Humminbird Solix is a great aid in locating schools in deep water. The fish can't hide!

The Z-Man DieZel MinnowZ are super tough, often lasting through dozens of hookups.

Typical rigging with heavy monofilament; leaders should be at least four feet.

Custom 7-foot medium-heavy custom rod by Danny McGuire paired with a Penn Squall 400 and 50-pound Fins Braid makes an excellent combo for this type of fishing.

drive the bait to the surface while gulls, terns, pelicans, and even frigate birds swoop in for breakfast.

One of the most incredible sights I ever witnessed was a jack cravelle slicing through a school of ribbonfish, flying several feet into the air with a hapless ribbon clenched crosswise in his jaws. I wish I had been filming it. I swear that jack looked like he was playing a harmonica.

Getting down to how we find our greatest success; we use mostly 30# tackle – medium-heavy to heavy-action rods and reels. Thirty-pound braided line is minimum; forty- to fifty-pound is better. First because the fish we are targeting are very strong, and second because the thinner profile of braid vs. mono helps keep baits tracking deep where fish will likely be holding when not blasting on the surface.

Another reason we opt for heavier tackle lies in the ability to quickly overpower the fish and accomplish healthy releases. The fish we are targeting are valuable broodstock, hence the emphasis on conservation. Long, drawn-out battles are invitations for sharks to grab a quick bite. Sometimes as much as half a thirty-pound fish. Shorter battles means the fish are easier to revive. The fish are more likely to survive and the angler gets back to fishing sooner. Holding the fish on a Boga Grip – right-side-up – while idling the boat forward is the best revival method we have found.

A high-quality depth finder with clear bottom-defining capabilities becomes an indispensable tool. Quite often, after surface frenzies begin to fade, or perhaps never happen at all, aggregations of bait and large predators can be marked in deeper water. Deeper, as in 30- to 40-feet, and sometimes more. There are places within the Matagorda Ship Channel,

Tipping the Spro Bucktail with a 7" Z-Man DieZel Paddletail provides extra attraction.

Pam Johnson can do it all. She can run the boat, watch the Humminbird to locate fish, coach anglers, wield the net…and reel 'em, too!

Continued on page 51…

"That's far enough Larry!"

THAT'S FAR ENOUGH, *Larry!*

STORY BY FRED DIEBOLD
with artwork By Ben Beaty

Based upon a true story!

We all have our funny fishing stories, but this one went on for days and was just too funny not to write about it.

Back in the day, I was employed as an electrical engineer and had a separate printing and blueprinting company as well.

Enter Slick Larry, a salesperson of blueprint paper and fisherman extraordinaire. Our printing company used blueprint paper from the most competitive suppliers. Larry's company was not the most competitive, so he had to resort to other tactics to get our business.

Over lunch one day Larry explained what great fisherman he and his buddy were by showing me photos of long stringers of fish they had caught. I admit, it was impressive. He also revealed that he and his buddy had recently bought a Boston Whaler saltwater fishing boat. If you know anything about saltwater fishing boats, this is a top of the line saltwater fishing boat.

Larry asked if I liked to go fishing? I confessed I was not much of a fisherman. All I catch is bottle bass, (fishing terminology for I need another beer).

I tried to wiggle out of any potential invite, claiming I was too busy.

Larry wasn't having it. "Look," he said, "There's a major holiday coming up. We could outfit you with rod and reel, waders, bait, etc. And besides, between your two jobs you're due for some relaxation and Port O'Connor is the perfect place to do that."

Not having a good enough excuse not to go, the trip was on. You have the actors, the place and now the– "That's far enough, Larry" fishing story.

Day 1

Our first day comprised traveling for hours with a boat in tow to Port O'Connor. We checked into our fishing motel that gave us a very musty room with three beds. As we settled in, based upon the smell, I wondered how many fish had been cleaned in the bathtub or sink we were now using to brush our teeth.

At dinner that evening I was told, or rather warned, we were going to get bait, etc., at the Pier Bait Shop, before the crack of dawn (5:00 am to be precise). I had to remind myself, this is what they call relaxing.

Since I was the inexperienced or novice angler, I was told my only function would be to stand alongside the truck and boat and let Larry know when the truck's rear wheels were about to touch the water. Just before the wheels of the truck touches the water, I was to loudly proclaim, "That's far enough, Larry!"

The first morning...

The 19" black and white TV in the motel room had a channel that displayed a multitude of gauges depicting local weather and water conditions in detail – air temperature, water temperature, wind direction and speed, barometric pressure, etc. You get the picture.

While struggling to get into the newly purchased brown waders and various other gear, Larry and his fishing buddy would lay out a well-worn map of the area on one of the beds. Based upon their map readings and data from the TV, they would decide the best place to fish.

While Larry and his buddy were discussing the best place to fish, I looked in the mirror and thought my appearance was somewhere between a clown or one of those faded black and white pictures of fishermen you've seen hanging on a wall some place.

We arrived at the pier at 5:00am. At the end of the pier was the old bait shop run by a guy with windswept eyes, a full beard, and a beer in his hand. Remember now, this is at 5:00am. The bait shop was an old rundown smelly shack with dead bait and live bait in tanks of bubbling

water. Larry and his long-time friend knew all the lingo and what to ask for, what the reds were biting on, etc.

In my clown suit; I mean waders, I assumed my position of importance alongside the truck and boat with my back to the pier near the water's edge.

Larry skillfully backed the boat and trailer into the water alongside the pier. I watched by the water's edge, knowing the importance of my job as the truck moved backwards, pushing the boat and trailer into the water.

Larry's fishing buddy, not totally trusting my first day at my assigned job, stood by in case I suddenly got laryngitis, a stroke, struck blind, or was Raptured.

Finally, I uttered my famous words along with my raised a right arm, just in case Larry suddenly went deaf on me. "That's far enough Larry!"

In the meantime, the old bait shop owner with the full beard and holding a beer, came out on to the pier above us, leaning on a lamppost, watching us launch the boat.

Larry's friend nodded, confirming my "That's far enough, Larry" signal was valid. Larry's buddy proceeded to the front of the hitched boat. Meanwhile, Larry was patiently waiting in the truck for a signal to go forward, indicating the boat was launched.

Larry's friend began to push the boat into the water. My initial job was over and was watching in anticipation of the launching of the Boston Whaler. I began hearing some grunts coming from Larry's fishing buddy, when I heard behind and above me the old bait shop owner say in a gruff but seasoned voice, "Sure would go in a lot easier if you unstrapped the boat first!" Larry's fishing buddy's face, beet red with embarrassment, quickly unstrapped the boat. We all nodded that we all make mistakes. No big deal, right?

Next day… wait, you might wonder what happened to our fishing all that day. Suffice to say we went fishing, and they taught me how to correctly bait the hook with different types of bait, where to cast, do it without a making big splash, plus many other inside secrets to successful fishing.

No one even got a nibble all day. But ask any fisherman if he hasn't got skunked a time or two. No big deal, right?

Day 2

The routine was much the same. At 5:00am or there-a-bouts, my eyes not focusing that early to give an exact time, Larry and his buddy again studied all the meters and gauges displayed on the motel TV. Based upon that knowledge and their bunk bed analysis, picked out where we should go to have the best chance to catch fish.

Arriving at the pier with most of our bait from yesterday, we assumed our jobs and positions to launch the boat. The only difference this time was there were about five people, including the bait shop guy with the beard and beer, watching us.

Everything went as planned. I did my "That's far enough, Larry" and his buddy pushed and launched the boat into the water. Larry started to drive off to park the truck and trailer when the guy with the beard and beer looking down from the pier says, "Sure is a lot of water in that boat!"

Yep, you may have guessed it– Larry's buddy forgot to install the drain plug in the rear of the boat. To get the plug in, Larry's buddy had to lean down to the point his waders filled with water. But, who, at one time or another, has not forgotten to put the plug in the boat? No big deal, right?

Armed with a new TV and bed top analysis, most of our bait, and my newly acquired fishing secrets, it was almost assured the fish wouldn't have a chance this time around.

After all day on the water, I am pretty certain none of us got a nibble again.

But hey, we were relaxing, right? However, I was beginning to regret not buying some of that bottle bass (beer), the bait shop guy was drinking.

Day 3

The morning routine changed this time. Larry and his buddy would not be embarrassed again. They put together a detailed boat launch sequence that NASA would have been proud of. They agreed and said, screw the TV and bed top analysis; announcing instead that we were going to the Old Army Hole where they claimed they never failed to catch fish. I was told The Old Army Hole was a dredged out area just off the shoreline of an old Army base.

As we arrived at the pier and bait shop, there was a guy at the door of the bait shop who shouted to others inside, "Here they come!" About fifteen people came out and lined the pier to watch us launch the boat. I swear, I could have sold tickets.

Everything Larry's buddy did went according to the detailed sequence for launching the boat without a hitch.

I did my "That's far enough, Larry" as Larry's buddy perfectly launched the boat. I then signaled we had successfully launched the boat. Larry would now drive and park the truck and trailer as before, except – you will not believe this – Larry forgot to take the truck out of reverse. So when he took his foot off the brake and hit the gas pedal, the trailer and part of the truck went straight into the water. One guy watching on the pier ran to his truck as he had a winch and pulled Larry, the truck, and boat trailer out of the water.

Sucking up the embarrassment, we went fishing at the Old Army Hole as planned.

We got some nibbles this time in that clear water. My legs were getting stiff by this time so I asked to be put to shore to walk it off.

As I walked along the shoreline, in the clear water, I saw a fish near the surface. I shouted to Larry who was casting in a different direction to, "Cast over here, I see a fish." Larry, per my instructions, cast in that direction and, to my surprise, the fish nibbled on the bait. Larry, a fisherman extraordinaire, jerked back on his rod, jerking the bait and hook right out of the fish's mouth. The fish seemed unfazed by the event and continued to swim near the surface. I shouted, "Do it again. He's still here." Larry repeated it all over again with the same result. This fish was either the dumbest or bravest in Port O'Connor because he came back to the same area. When I saw the fish again, I shouted to Larry, "He's back. Cast again, but do nothing until I tell you."

I watched until the fish looked hooked when I said, "OK, you can reel him in." The good news is we caught a fish but it took two of us. The bad news, I was told it was a very bony fish and not good for eating.

The trip back was uneventful and very quiet. I needed a break from all the relaxing but I could not help wondering how did they create those pictures of stringers of fish Larry had shown me that convinced me to go on this fishing trip.

Note: They never asked me to go fishing again, but I came away with a great fishing story.

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JAY WATKINS

ASK THE PRO

ONE BITE CAN TELL US ALL WE NEED TO KNOW

If you've been fishing, I hope you have been able to get on the water early to avoid the extreme summer heat we are experiencing. The days are growing shorter, so hopefully by late September we will see more overnight cooling in our shallow waters. This time of year also brings the possibility of receiving seriously needed rainfall due to increased activity in the tropics. Right now all is fairly quiet with only one tropical system in the gulf, which might become Danielle, predicted to impact the Texas-Mexico border if it hits Texas at all. Some rain would surely be nice.

On the fishing scene, my trout fishing has been tougher than normal. Reds are plentiful in some areas but not always easy to catch due to the combination of light winds and summertime low tides. I am still targeting trout primarily and continuing to release all, and staying away from the dolphins whenever possible. We make a practice to leave areas where dolphins are eating trout from our lines and those we are releasing. To me, dolphins have become a big issue. No matter how natural it is for them to do what they do, they are doing it today with a higher degree of efficiency than I ever noticed in the past. Growing up we seldom had issues with dolphin eating fish off our lines or stringers.

This past week I experienced a really tough trout bite most every day. Some of this was due to a pre-dawn major feeding period that was followed by a mid-morning moonset minor. I no longer do the "run in the dark" at 5:30am; my eyes are simply not what they were in my younger years. That said, this week I barely caught the tail end of the major feeding period four of the five days I was on the water. We did have three inches of rain, always a godsend in late August, but it did not change the air temperatures nor reduce the water temperature for more than a day or so.

With water temps running 85° to 87° most days the bite continues to be an early morning gig. Overcast mornings, which have been very few, have been the best as far as quality trout goes. We had two very good days the week of the rain but as soon as the sun returned our quality trout bite slowed drastically. Add to this our solunar timing and I was spending the coolest portion of my day fishing areas where I know the fish are present but having difficulty patterning the bite. Understand this, we have to get a few bites to establish what water depth the fish are in, what structure they are on, which way they are set up and facing, and how they want the lure presented. We also need to learn how aggressively they will pursue the lure and whether or not they are moving or settled in and become stationary. That's a lot right?

Miss Lyla showing off her first trout on her first-ever wading trip.

It is a lot but it is all extremely important information to the angler and none of it can be established if we do not get that occasional bite. Bites show me tons on tough days and my mental picture helps me decipher what I need to do to increase my chances of catching the fish I am on. My clients today get all that I have to offer in the where, when, why, and how; whereas when I was a much younger guide I was really more concerned about just catching them so I would look good at the dock. I am thankful that those days are long over for me and I feel for the younger guides that feel pressured to not only produce but to kill all the fish that they put the client on. I was there and totally understand the pressure to produce and the pressures of raising a family on a guiding income. Every day this week we would step out of the boat and catch a few really nice trout and maybe some solid reds, only to have the bite slow drastically as the sun rose.

Enough about why I believe it was such a tough

Mason Clower releasing a great summertime trout, his personal best!

Reward for hard work and attention to detail on a tough bite day.

bite the past several days. Let me try to explain step by step how I establish areas of interest as well as the methods by which we approach and work these areas. I am all about two things and these are predominate bottom structure for the area I am fishing, and food supply. If bait is present in an abundant and predictable supply, I begin to search for additional signs. Pelicans, royal terns, gulls, and osprey are avian species that I like to see in the area I have chosen. I guess dolphins can now be a positive sign that trout are present despite all the negatives associated with their presence. Slicking is always a telltale sign of fish feeding activity. Trout, reds, flounder, gafftop, and hardhead will all make slicks, but there is something in the location and the pattern of the slicks that helps me determine the species. That's probably an entire other article and quite honestly I am not even sure if I could explain my thought process in establishing the species well enough for you to understand it.

I also like to have water movement created by either tide or wind. The hotter the water the more important I feel that water movement becomes. This is true for trout and red fish alike. I approach the likely areas at slow idle or by drifting in. I wade slowly as I approach and don't let my anglers push forward. Once we enter casting range I start looking at the mood of the bait fish. Are they making high, lazy jumps or short, frantic skips? Bait fish fleeing predators are not known for lots of air time.

Where is the bait activity happening – over submerged grass, deeper potholes, or along the edge of the flat where the bottom slopes away to deeper water? These are critical observations that can weigh heavily in whether we are catching or not. By placing your lure in these zones you are on your way to a positive result but there is still more work to be done.

Now we have to determine the depth in which fish are staging. Many times gamefish and bait alike will suspend in deeper water versus sitting close to the bottom, which they will do as well. Being aware of the depth where bites are occurring and then repeating the successful retrieve is the key to earning more bites. I fish with a great guy and fisherman Dale Combs. When conditions require, he will count as his lure falls through the water column. On one of my first winter trips with him, I heard him tell one of his buddies that the fish were on a "three count." I was like okay – one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three – from then on. Great learning experience for me and one I have never forgotten.

The key ingredient to catching fish when we are working good areas in-between feeds or during tough days does not lie within all that we are capable of doing, but lies within getting that one bite. Now, if paying attention, that first bite will tell us all we need to know. Yesterday I continued to tell my group that we needed just one bite to show us where the fish were, what depth they were in, and how they wanted the lure presented. Around noon I finally got a bite after working a deep gut that had a gradual slope to shallower water and scattered grass. I actually counted to six and then slowly dusted the lure close to the bottom. As the lure began the upward slope I increased the twitch frequently and was immediately bit. As I reeled the fish to me she was followed by another identical trout. Over about thirty minutes we landed eight decent fish. One bite turned a tough day into a little better day.

Tough periods during fishing days will provide the best opportunities to improve our fishing skills and knowledge. In order to learn and retain what we learn, we must first want to learn. I am all about learning and continuing to learn because I am all about continually striving to be the best I can be each day. I hope to see some of you on my boat or around the docks this next month. Fall is almost here and winter is not far behind.

May your fishing always be catching! -Guide, Jay Watkins

View The Video

Open Camera and hover over QR Code. When link appears at top of screen tap to open in YouTube.

Conditions Dictate Lure Selection

CONTACT

Jay Watkins has been a full-time fishing guide at Rockport, TX, for more than 20 years. Jay specializes in wading year-round for trout and redfish with artificial lures. Jay covers the Texas coast from San Antonio Bay to Corpus Christi Bay.

Telephone 361-729-9596
Email Jay@jaywatkins.com
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TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

By Alex Nunez | Ecosystem Resources Program

FIELD NOTES

COLD WATER PREDICTION:
USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO PROTECT SEA LIFE DURING WINTER FREEZES

Sudden and severe water temperature drops have resulted in substantial fish kills and sea turtle strandings along the Texas coast. Concerns about maritime commerce exacerbating these impacts in the Laguna Madre have been expressed as far back as the 1980s. Stakeholders were concerned fish were using the Intra Coastal Water Way (ICWW) as a thermal refuge in the Laguna Madre (LM) and barge traffic was impacting those fish. So, members of the Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association (GICA), the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA), Texas A&M-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC), and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) sought to develop strategies to mitigate impacts related to barge operations and to balance impacts to natural resources with the economic impact on barge operators. One mitigation strategy is the voluntary suspension of barge operations when water temperatures are predicted to fall below a threshold of 40 Degrees Fahrenheit for over 24 hours. But the challenge was predicting the drop in water temperature early enough for barge operators to adjust operations. To do this an accurate and precise water temperature model was needed.

In 2006, the TAMU-CC Conrad Blucher Institute (CBI) began development of the water temperature predictive model. The first phase of the project installed water temperature profiling stations within the Intracoastal Waterway, in and around the "land cut", which is the southern section of the ICWW that was dredged across an extensive tidal flat connecting the Upper and Lower Laguna Madre. Water temperature sensors were deployed at multiple depths to measure water temperatures from the surface water to the bottom sediment. By monitoring these depth profiles, the study team concluded water temperatures were similar throughout the water column making it unlikely that fish seek thermal refuge at the bottom of the Intracoastal Waterway. Researchers also concluded that water temperatures were similar throughout the LM by comparing results with other stations throughout the system, except in Baffin Bay.

The next step was to understand what conditions influence water temperature changes within the system. For example, a frontal system passes through the region and air temperature drops. Winds associated with the front mixes the water, dissipating the heat from the water column. The shallowness of the Laguna Madre causes water temperatures to drop at a faster rate than surrounding areas like Corpus Christi Bay or Baffin Bay. By using this concept, researchers sought to quantify observations and environmental responses for model development. Air temperature was identified as the main driver influencing water temperature because the of system's shallowness. Statistical analysis also highlighted the relative importance of time lags for predicting changes in water temperature. These observations and data collected from water temperature profiling gave researchers the information needed to develop the water temperature prediction model.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) was employed for model development. Programming techniques included the use of Machine Learning methods such as random forests (RF) and Artificial Neural Networks (ANN). Machine learning uses mathematical algorithms to build a model based on samples of data, known as training data. Analysis of the training data allowed the model to "learn" how to make predictions. Training data for developing the model included water and air temperature measurements at the Bird Island Basin (BIB) Station in the northern portion of the Upper Laguna Madre and predicted air temperature from NOAA. BIB has a long time series of data, 20 years, with limited data interruptions and captured numerous cold events in the study area. The result is a model that can make predictions about water temperatures based on the

Figure 1: Map of the Laguna Madre showing the location of Bird Island Basin and the Land Cut.

data from the field. The model ran successfully for many years

In 2017, CBI and sea turtle researchers presented findings of their study highlighting cold water temperature thresholds for sea turtles. This included a proposal to increase the water temperature threshold from 40 degrees to 46 degrees Fahrenheit over a 24-hour period. GICA agreed to the proposal for expanding mitigation efforts to include fisheries and sea turtles in response to extreme cold-water events. By this time predictions were calculated manually due to aging IT software and other infrastructure issues. A model overhaul was also necessary.

In 2018 funding became available to restructure the model into a water temperature predictive system. Newer IT tools and development of a new database, software, and additional data source improved the model, its analytics, and its resiliency. The system now consists of several consolidated ANN models to predict falling water temperature and duration. A sensitivity analysis assessed the impact of imprecise air temperature predictions to improve model performance. A new database and software were developed to ingest and store NOAA predictions. Additionally, air temperature predictions were ingested from the IBM Global High-Resolution Atmospheric Forecasting System (IBM GRAF) into the system as part of collaborations within one of the inaugural National Science Foundation AI institutes, AI2ES.org. This new global weather model updates hourly and at a 3 – 4 km resolution for improved analytics. Instead of providing one air temperature prediction per location/lead time, IBM provides the team a range of predictions allowing researchers to get a better idea of how confident the models are and how likely deviations are from the main prediction.

In 2020 the automated cold water prediction system had not been completed. The initial prediction of a drop in water temperature made by researchers was accurate. However, the duration of the water temperature drop proved to be challenging and was predicted to be too short. The concerns researchers had about manual water temperature predictions came to fruition. If the automated system had been operational, the guidance ahead of Winter Storm Uri would have been better, likely proposing a recommendation for a longer navigation and coastal work interruption. Following this event, data was captured and applied to the systems for machine learning purposes.

By fall 2021, the full system was in place and put to the test in February 2022. It accurately predicted the initial drop in water temperature below 47 deg F for over 24 hours and predicted the duration of the event. The prediction assisted in mitigating the impacts of a very large cold stunning event in the LM system by prompting the issuance of a U.S. Coast Guard notice to mariners and the request by GICA for its members to modify barge operations. Also, volunteers were alerted in time and many organizations coordinated wildlife rescuers to save over 400 sea turtles.

Thanks to the 20-year collaborative development of the water temperature predictive system, modifications to barge operations and mitigation efforts have been successfully implemented along the Texas coast during cold weather events. The predictive model's success is the result of a successful collaboration between the maritime transportation industry, state, and federal partners, as well as invested stakeholders.

Check the TPWD Outdoor Annual, your local TPWD Law Enforcement office, or tpwd.texas.gov for more info.

DAVE ROBERTS

SHALLOW WATER FISHING

IT'S OCTOBER!

As I sit here to write at my kitchen table watching it rain, I'm having a severe case of writer's block. Selecting a topic and title is usually much easier but striving to avoid being repetitive with the information I provide has me stumped this time. Sitting for a while and flipping through older photos and trips that I have taken during this month, it instantly put a smile on my face. If you like to spend your time in the outdoors, grab your rod and head to the water, it's October!

I believe it is safe to say that by now, the dog days of Summer are finally over for good. We had some really hot and dry spells this year and I am glad they are behind us. Now that fall is about to be in full swing, I couldn't be happier. I'm not the only one that is happy about the change in weather either, every fish in the bay seems to be rejoicing as well. This is a prime time to get out and enjoy some of the finest fishing that can be had on the Gulf Coast.

Some of my first memories of fishing during this month came with my dad and brother. When we were much younger, my dad made us a deal that if we had good grades in school he would take us out on a Friday when the fishing got good. This was always a great motivation to pay attention and learn in class with hopes of getting to skip school for a day to fish. My brother and I would hold up our end of the bargain and right around the first cool front in October, we would go fishing. Since it was a weekday, there wouldn't be many boats on the water nor competition. As soon as the sun would come up the few boats that were hanging around would scatter across the lake to their own group of birds. We would get in the middle of a group of gulls and begin catching trout after trout. Our only instructions were to throw them in the bottom of the boat and catch another. At the time there wasn't many small fish in the mix so we knew they were all keepers and that the action wouldn't last long. Eventually the school would move and we would stop to count fish and put them in the cooler. After crashing a few groups of birds we would have our limits, but would continue to catch fish until they fully disappeared. This always made for memorable days on the water.

Once I got out of school and into the real world, I quickly realized my schedule was not near as flexible with my new responsibilities. However, one of my first real jobs offered paid vacation and I wasn't sure exactly when to use it. After thinking about it, I decided to save one week and take it during the last week of October; I still do to this day. My intentions were pretty straight forward, I'm going to fish every day until I go back to work.

I cannot begin to tell you how much I learned and how much fun I had during this time off work. As the first few days came, I would

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be paddling at first light and would head straight to the back of the marsh. Along my way I would come across several fish crashing shrimp along the shoreline and not one of them would pass up a gold spoon. As the day went on, I would come across schools of redfish grouped up and eating everything in sight. Some groups were smaller while others would have well over 50 fish in them. I would then exit the marsh covered in mud and fish slime and add to it by finding a group of birds working over trout.

After getting my fill of catching fish after fish for about 4 days straight, I would decide to ease up on them a bit. I told myself I wouldn't cast into any schools, instead I started to question where these fish come from and where do they go. So instead of catching, I started to follow them and just watch. The interesting thing was that most of the schools I watched came from the same direction and would leave in the same direction; it was almost like they were following a predetermined route. This helped me to understand how these fish would move through this certain area year round and I always knew where to start.

By the end of my vacation I would be completely wore out but that was a hell of a problem to have. During that week off, I would encounter more fish than I could count. The thing was, it didn't matter where I decided to go, the fish were there.

Now that I have a skiff and my work schedule allows me to fish more often, I never let an October day go by without getting on the water. This is always a fine chance to try to bring new people who have never gotten to fully experience how crazy the marsh can get. It is always fun to watch someone new cast into a big school of hungry redfish crashing bait.

It is finally that time of year and once again, I am smiling just thinking about it. One of my favorite scenes is the sun peaking over the horizon on a cool morning. You can hear the whistles and buzzing of teal overhead as you ease into a pond and make the first decision of the day; which school of fish do you want to catch first? Grab a light jacket, your rods and other necessities, and get out on the water. It's October!

View The Video

Open Camera and hover over QR Code. When link appears at top of screen tap to open in YouTube.

Tips for fishing October

CONTACT

Dave Roberts is an avid kayak-fishing enthusiast fishing primarily the inshore Upper Coast region with occasional adventures to surf and nearshore Gulf of Mexico.

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The San Bernard Wildlife Refuge shoreline protection project will plant cordgrass behind breakwaters where sediment has begun to accrete. This type of restoration has been successful up and down the Texas coast, such as this effort along JD Murphree Wildlife Management area in Jefferson County. Photo by John Blaha.

JOHN BLAHA

TSFMAG CONSERVATION NEWS

HABITAT RESTORATION & CREATION REMAINS AT THE FORE

CCA Texas and its habitat initiative, Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow, along with the CCA National habitat initiative, Building Conservation Trust, have funded over $9.3 million to habitat restoration and creation projects along the Texas coast. These funds have come primarily from grassroots fundraising efforts of CCA Texas chapters across the state, and also through grants from private individuals, foundations, and corporate gifts. Through the grassroots efforts and community grants and gifts, CCA Texas has supported and been a part of 46 habitat creation and restoration projects along the Texas coast.

The CCA Texas Management Committee recently approved $41,000 in funding for a 15 acre marsh cordgrass planting project on the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. The San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge is located in Brazoria and Matagorda counties, and encompasses over 70,000 acres that protects salt marsh and saltwater lakes, coastal prairies, freshwater lakes and marshes, intermittent streams, and riparian and bottomland forests in the Brazos and San Bernard River floodplains. The refuge borders approximately 10 miles of shoreline along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). Since its establishment in 1968, the refuge has historically seen shoreline erosion along the GIWW due to major storm events, heavy rains, and continuous wave action. In the most recent decades, this erosion has begun to consume roughly four feet of refuge marsh shoreline annually. This project will use smooth cordgrass (Spartina alterniflora) plantings to protect the area's coastal estuarine marsh and help ensure continued protection of nearby communities from storm events. The refuge has recently added 4 miles of breakwater to minimize erosion and plans are underway to continue adding subsequent projects for protection annually. Sediment will accrete behind these breakwaters and support marsh establishment. These plantings behind the breakwaters initiate new marsh creation, while also creating a strong living shoreline to protect against future storm events.

This project will also address eroding interior estuarine marshes at the refuge. These areas have been impacted by storms, subsidence, or other causes. Conversion of estuarine marsh to open water lessens the value of the refuge as a barrier to community storm impacts, and more importantly a loss of critically important estuarine

The Gonzales Come and Catch It chapter was the third new chapter started by CCA Texas in 2022. This event along with Salt Grass (Winne) and Bastrop County all enjoyed great success in attendance and fundraising. The grassroots efforts of local anglers remain a key strength in the success of CCA Texas. Photo by John Blaha.

habitat, that is the basis for much of the coastal eco-systems. These areas can be replanted with smooth cordgrass, and the planted areas will experience sediment accretion, followed by the eventual establishment of typical estuarine marsh plant species that occur at higher elevations than smooth cordgrass.

Execution of this project will be accomplished by working with local contractors specializing in plant harvest and transport to re-planting sites to sow the plugs (actual clumps of cord grass). Cordgrass plugs are either raised in nurseries along the Texas coast or are hand-picked from the marsh locally. Once the plugs are on site, CCA members, other volunteers, Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) staff, and chosen contractor employees will plant them. Plugs are typically planted by using a small spade shovel in water 18 inches or less. When planting is completed, monitoring will be done monthly by FWS staff to ensure the plants are growing and spreading along the coastal area. While contracted professional help will ensure that the planting acreage goal is obtained, community and volunteer grass plantings are being planned. This effort is a great opportunity to educate people about the importance of the coastal marsh to their communities. Outdoors enthusiasts such as birders and anglers will benefit from access to these areas as this project will increase habitat resiliency for many years to come. Working with the community will only better educate the importance of the marsh and its sustainability for the future. FWS has many public areas and projects like this one. Working with CCA Texas members and the general public will introduce new visitors to the refuge, strengthen environmental education, and support further work between the refuge and local communities. CCA Texas staff and volunteers are excited to work closely with the US Fish and Wildlife Services employees on this beneficial project.

For more information about CCA Texas and its habitat projects, please visit www.ccatexas.org.

New Chapter Success Continues

CCA Texas recently started its third new chapter of 2022 with the Gonzales, Come and Catch It chapter. The Come and Catch It chapter held their first event on August 11 and followed the path set this year by the Salt Grass and Bastrop County chapters with a great first time event. Over 300 conservation minded anglers attended the event held at The Expo and JB Wells in Gonzales. The energy and excitement were high and the local volunteers are looking forward to 2023. The CCA Texas staff and leadership are excited for the growth of the organization and the great success of these three first-year events. If you live in these communities or/and other communities with chapters, CCA Texas welcomes you as volunteers, supporters and donors. For local chapter information, be sure to visit www.ccatexas.org or contact CCA Texas staff at (713) 626-4222.

CCA Texas Weighs in on Draft EIS for Channel Deepening Project

In late July 2022, CCA Texas provided comments to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposed Corpus Christi Ship Channel Deepening Project (Project). In our recent letter to USACE, we expressed our serious concerns that Sections Three, Four and Five of the Draft EIS are deficient and contrary to requirement under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Draft EIS does not address the full scope of the overall impacts to fisheries and habitats of Texas coastal ecosystems. Briefly, we find deficiencies in impacts to oyster reefs, recreational fisheries, salinity regimes in Corpus Christi Bay, estuarine fauna, and most importantly, significant deficiencies in the overall cumulative impacts of related projects on coastal processes, physical oceanography, water quality, wetlands, seagrasses, and aquatic resources.

Oyster Regulatory & Oyster Restoration Ad-Hoc Panels Begin Meetings

In late July and early August, two Ad-Hoc Panels began to meet at the directive of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission (Commission). While these are not long-term advisory committees, these groups have some important work ahead of them as they will provide the Commission with recommendations on how to proceed moving forward on any future oyster fishery management actions (license buyback, ideas to improve sustainability, and oyster reef protections) and reef restoration activities across the coast. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff updated the Commission on the progress of the panels in late August and we ask all CCA Texas members to remain engaged on this issue.

Gulf of Mexico. Photo by SEFSC Pascagoula Laboratory; Collection of Brandi Noble, NOAA/NMFS/SEFSC.

STEPHANIE BOYD

FISHY FACTS

LESSER ELECTRIC RAY

You've done the Stingray Shuffle, but what about the Electric Slide?
~Padre Island National Seashore Facebook

Every regular beachgoer in Texas knows the need to shuffle your feet to avoid being stung by a stingray, in a move dubbed the 'stingray shuffle.' The shuffle might also help protect against the lesser electric ray - a species of numbfish that lives in the Gulf. Electric rays are part of the superorder Batoidea, which includes skates, stingrays, sawfish, and guitarfish. This species of ray, *Nacine bancroftii,* has a flat, near-circular body, short tail, broad pelvic fins, two small dorsal fins, and a big triangular tail. It generally reaches 18 inches long and 8 inches wide (slightly smaller than other electric rays), though it can reach up to 33 inches long. Colouration ranges from dark brown to reddish orange with irregular rings on top, and white to greenish on bottom. It has 17-34 teeth in each jaw, depending on the age and size of the ray. The skin is soft and loose, and lacking any dermal denticles. Juvenile lesser electric rays usually have a number of dark rings and blotches along with dark oval loops. Two long electric organs run from the front of the eyes down to the rear end of the disc. These organs can generate up to 37 volts, which they use to stun prey and to defend themselves. Although these numbfish have a low-intensity shock compared to other electric rays, the effect can still be quite startling.

Lesser electric rays are a demersal, or benthic, fish inhabiting tropical and subtropical coastal waters, on sand or mud bottoms. They are commonly found partially buried along sandy shorelines, seagrass beds, and sometimes near coral reefs, from the surf zone up to 200 feet. They range from North Carolina to at least the north coast of South America, and it is locally common in Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. Records from further south in South America probably refer to the closely related Brazilian electric ray, *Narcine brasiliensis*.

This generally sluggish swimmer is nocturnal, remaining motionless during the day and foraging for food in the substrate at night. Polychaete annelids are their primary diet. However, they also eat short-length snake eels, small bony fish, different species of crustaceans, and sea anemones. The ray uses its pectoral fins to guide the food to its mouth, which is located under its body. Many larger fishes, including sharks, prey on the lesser electric ray.

Lesser electric rays, like all rays, have an ovoviviparous mode of reproduction. Ovoviviparity is distinct from oviparity (egg-laying). In oviparity, the eggs are laid and rely on the yolk sac for nourishment until they hatch. Ovoviviparous animals produce eggs, but instead of laying them, the eggs develop and hatch inside the mother's body. The embryos are first nourished with yolk and then with histotroph, a protein-rich liquid secreted from the mother's uterine lining, and while ovoviviparous animals do not have umbilical cords or a placenta with which to provide nutrients and waste exchange, some species – such as sharks and rays – do provide gas exchange for developing eggs inside the womb. In such cases, the egg sac is extremely thin or is simply a membrane. When their

development is complete, the young are born live. By delaying birth after hatching, the offspring enter the environment in a more advanced stage of development than oviparous young.

After a gestation period of 3 months, anywhere between 4 and 15 young are born. However, there is a possibility of diapause – a pause in development after fertilization until environmental conditions are optimal. This would result in a longer gestation, up to a year. Pups are independent from birth, at a length of about 3.5 inches. They are also born with the ability to give off electrical charges. Females mature around 2 years old, between 20 and 26 inches in length.

Lesser electric rays are not aggressive and pose little danger to humans – though stepping on one can certainly be a shocking experience. An updated analysis of the species examining a number of data sources determined that there has been no decrease in abundance in the northern Gulf of Mexico since 1972 and that the trend in abundance is relatively stable. Levels of bycatch from shrimp trawl fishery are small primarily because the shrimp fishery operates in areas where lesser electric rays aren't found. Additionally, based on interactions with commercial fishing gear and the ray's small size and fast growth rate, impacts from bycatch are likely to be low. Electric rays also have limited to no commercial value and are generally discarded.

Where I learned about lesser electric rays, and you can too!

TPWD
tpwd.texas.gov/fishing/sea-center-texas/flora-fauna-guide/gulf-waters/animals-of-the-gulf-waters/lesser-electric-ray

Texas Marine Species
txmarspecies.tamug.edu/fishdetails.cfm?scinameID=Narcine%20bancroftii

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
myfwc.com/research/saltwater/sharks-rays/ray-species/lesser-electric-ray/

Florida Museum
www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/discover-fish/species-profiles/narcine-bancroftii/

Science Direct
www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0944200609000415

The Shark Forum
www.sharksandrays.com/lesser-electric-ray/

IUCN Red List
www.iucnredlist.org/species/63142/3121523

Federal Register
www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/07/22/2016-17397/endangered-and-threatened-wildlife-and-plants-notice-of-12-month-finding-on-a-petition-to-list-the

Animal Database
animals.fandom.com/wiki/Lesser_Electric_Ray

Kidadl
kidadl.com/animal-facts/lesser-electric-ray-facts

View The Video

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Similar species, Narcine brasiliensis.

The torch has definitely been passed; Dustin and his second tiger of the recent father/son sharking adventure – released.

ERIC OZOLINS

EXTREME KAYAK FISHING & SHARKS FROM THE SAND

FULL CIRCLE

The roots of land-based shark fishing run deep in the Lone Star State. For some 70 years, generations have shared their great love and cheerful passion for the sport with their children. Many memories have been made via family fishing adventures on the strip of sand forming our precious coast.

For some fathers, no brand of joy surpasses handing down the fishing torch to their adventurous offspring. In both the teaching and learning of the fundamentals and the raw encounters with nature, we find threads that bind families who share a love for the outdoors. I've witnessed this firsthand.

While my daughters are still quite young, they'll likely follow in some of my footsteps. Soon enough, I'll experience a more expanded version of this phenomenon. With any luck, the story of my clan will come to resemble that of another outdoor father/son team who have treated me like family for over twenty years.

I know plenty of outdoor enthusiasts. My occupation and travels have rewarded me with some great friendships. Of all the people I personally know and call good friends, none has lived off the land and water more than Dwade Hickey, who accompanied me on my first hardcore beach trips, when we made journeys down the island together.

I discovered some of my earliest adventures on Padre

Dustin Hickey highlighting the business end of his first tiger shark prior to release.

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Island National Seashore while fishing with Dwade and his son Dustin, who at the time stood about knee-high to a heron. Even at that size and in those early days, we could all see he would follow the outdoor path in his father's footsteps. Now, a couple decades later, the stars have aligned, and the time has arrived for passing down their family torch on the sands of Padre Island.

Dwade inspired me to pursue tiger sharks. When we first started fishing together, he'd already beached three large tigers, before I ever caught my first. In those days, from his home in Pleasanton, Dwade would plan his weekend adventures and show up at the coast, rain or shine. I remember one of our first serious sharking years when Dwade, Curtis Mai, and I fished four consecutive weekends in a steady monsoon, making the best of the situation.

Fishing was and is my true calling. Until I met Dwade, I never did any hunting; in fact, I had never even been on a real ranch. Dwade is a more versatile outdoorsman; he has an extensive resume, including everything from hunting guide to snake wrangler. I remember discovering several cages of rattlesnakes in a shed behind his house, during the weekend of his wedding.

Numerous and varied are the stories this man could tell. Dwade educated me about the details related to the hunting world. We stalked deer, trapped hogs, wrangled rattlesnakes. I was intrigued with this previously unknown world, especially the ways in which details related to it correlate with the sport of fishing.

Once Dwade's obsession with coastal fishing fully blossomed, he moved with his family to North Padre Island, just a few blocks from me. Fishing fever then engulfed him. The lifestyle is different down here on the island, relaxing but expensive. Like many of us, Dwade fished as much as he could, but still worked various jobs to support his family.

Soon after his move to the coast, his serious, multi-day expeditions down the beach became limited. The long drought he experienced without catching a big tiger shark, or any really large shark, became a running joke in our circle of friends. Eventually, I got three tigers to equal him, then surpassed him with five, then ten, then twenty, before Dwade was able to rejoin the race.

In 2016, I was with Dwade when he caught a 10′6″ mako, which at the time was the largest mako ever landed on a Texas beach. Dwade kept the title for about a month, until I landed a slightly larger one. The man did have his mojo back, though. Late on a summer night, two years later, Dwade accomplished a feat which had eluded him for all his life, landing an impressive great hammerhead, which measured nearly 12 feet.

In August of this year, my old friend and fishing buddy struck again, this time, most appropriately, on a sharking adventure with Dustin, who's now in his twenties. Prior to their trip, the Padre shark action had been on fire. The large tiger sharks were hungry and feeding. Hammers were still around too, regularly demolishing baits. Even the big bulls were devouring our largest baits.

Both Dustin and Dwade asked me for suggestions about where to go and when. Due to unique and unpredictable patterns, the fish I had been catching far to the south had started moving northward. I tipped them off to an area I thought they should try, and they headed to the beach to write their own story. I could never have predicted the epic way their adventure unfolded.

Dwade finally ended his years-long tiger drought – released.

Dwade and Dustin preparing for the release!

Conditions were quite favorable to run baits via kayak, as is the norm this time of year, though not so much in 2022, with its consistently intense winds. Given the immaculate window of opportunity they caught, something good was bound to happen; action materialized soon after they deployed their baits.

On most every trip we sharkers take, our end goal is to catch the biggest fish around, most often a tiger or hammerhead. While plenty of big sharks were in the area, nothing is guaranteed, but both Hickey gentlemen had a good feeling about the events to come.

As fate would have it, this would be their day. Dustin struck first, landing a 10′6″ tiger. This shark alone would've made the trip a success, not only because of its size, but because it was Dustin's first tiger. They released the monster and salvaged the used bait, re-rigging and re-deploying it.

Next, Dwade hooked and landed a 9′3″ tiger of his own... ending his long tiger drought. But the father/son duo was not done yet. Within hours, an ecstatic, adrenaline-fueled Dustin managed to land the third big shark of the trip—a massive, 11′7″ tiger. It's safe to say Dwade could not have been more proud. In essence, he had passed the metaphorical sharking torch over to his son. After many fun and fruitful family adventures, father and son had combined their passions, shared the rewards and seen their outdoor lives evolve full circle.

CONTACT

For the past decade Eric 'Oz' Ozolins has been promoting shark catch and release and assisting various shark research programs. Eric offers guided shark fishing on Padre Island National Seashore. Also renowned for extreme kayak big game fishing, Eric is the owner of Catch Sharks Tackle Company.

Email oz@oceanepics.com
Websites oceanepics.com | catchsharks.com

...continued from page 31.

near the inshore end of the jetties, where the depths can range 50- to 60-feet. No matter, they cannot hide from our Humminbird Solix.

The trick is to find the fish and then determine which direction they might be heading, or perhaps staged. It is then a simple matter to determine the depth and current strength to drop a lure into their midst. Sometimes this requires dropping the jigs a hundred yards or more up-current. Once the sweet spot is identified, engaging the spot-lock feature on your trolling motor is a great aid in obtaining additional hookups.

The rigging is fairly basic; about four feet of 150# mono leader. The old rule of thumb says the leader should be at least as long as the fish you are targeting. The pounds-test recommendation is a bit of overkill, intended more for avoiding breakoffs and chafing when lures hang on bottom clutter than subduing the fish you are likely to encounter. Our leaders have a Spro swivel crimped on one end and a heavy-duty snap for attaching lures on the other.

Our favorite lures are Spro Bucktail Jigs. Bucktail dressing mimics baitfish with incredible likeness when jigged vertically and with sweeping motions. The Gamakatsu hooks are tough and sharp – right out of the package. Depending current strength and depth being fished, we use either 3-ounce, 4-ounce, and sometimes even 6-ounce jigs.

Additional attraction can be created by rigging a large Z-Man swimbait such as the 7" DieZel MinnowZ paddletail or DoormatadorZ curlytail on the Spro Bucktail. Bright and dark colors work equally well. The proprietary ElaZtech material the baits are made of is tough beyond belief. They resist wear and tear like no other we've tried. A dozen or more large fish on a single bait is very common.

We typically rig a couple rods with various jig weights to accommodate whichever depths are being fished. Casting to surface frenzies can be accomplished with lighter lures, obviously. Getting down to fish that are suspended deeper calls for more weight. Either way, getting baits to the fish is essential. Time spent re-rigging when the bite is on is time wasted.

Perhaps what I love most is the short boat ride – about 10 minutes on average from Port O'Connor to the jetties – and it's such a family-friendly outing. Youngsters get a kick out of seeing fish larger than themselves being landed and, once they are strong enough, put a rod in their hand. We do however recommend a tether on younger anglers, and also on the rod… to insure both remain in the boat. Another great aspect is the relative shortness of these trips. We leave at first safe light, and typically return to the dock between 9:00 and 10:00 am; or as soon as everybody aboard cries uncle. These are hard-fighting fish!

Weather is always a consideration but, generally speaking, any day with wind forecasted less than 15-mph, several days before and one or two following the new and full moon, late May through October, are good candidates. The moon dictates the tides, and strong tidal current is essential in this type of fishing. Learn jetty jigging. You'll be glad you did.

NEW

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Built on Daiwa's advanced "Light but Tough" platform, the Daiwa® Ballistic LT Spinning Reel offers a solid choice for anglers pursuing a wide range of game fish in both fresh and saltwater. Super-compact yet powerful, with the latest technology in weight reduction, strength enhancement, and smooth durability. Zaion™ body is light and incredibly tough, made from advanced "high density" carbon strain. The mainshaft is Magsealed with magnetic oil to keep contaminants or saltwater away from inner workings. Digitally machined A7075 aircraft-grade aluminum Digigear™ ensures smooth transfer of power with every revolution of the handle. 7-bearing (6+1) system includes 1 CRBB, 5 stainless steel ball bearings, and 1 instant anti-reverse roller bearing. Daiwa Ballistic LT Spinning Reel is primed to perform for your favorite freshwater, inshore, or offshore applications.
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THE VIEW FROM *Matagorda*

BINK GRIMES

Bink Grimes is a full-time fishing and hunting guide, freelance writer and photographer, and owner of Sunrise Lodge on Matagorda Bay.

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Everybody loves October…hard to argue with cooler temperatures, higher tides, and hungrier fish. The switch from bright-colored clothing to browns, greens, and camos get the angler/hunter fired up for the all the possibilities that only the last quarter of the year provides.

The reefs in East Bay are players every month, but with shrimp migrating through the bay, waders working mid-bay reefs should see excellent results. We like tossing Super Spook Jrs and She Pups on the edges of the reefs for big fish.

Higher tides this month will be a boon for anglers targeting redfish. Again, there are lots of shrimp in the back lakes and marshes and many will target those fish with small topwaters and live shrimp under a Mid-Coast cork. As those fish begin to move into the bays they will be found on the grassy shorelines on both the north and south side. Many will toss a shrimp right against the edge of the grass while others will work the same zones tossing a DOA Shrimp or small topwaters like She Pups and Super Spook Jrs.

While many may be unaware, some of the largest redfish will be found in the middle of East Bay under birds. When things are really firing off in the fall there will be 10-20 groups working in the bay. One will have solid trout beneath; the other will be all redfish. Many times when terns are circling it is a sure sign of redfish.

Waders along the south shoreline of West Bay will work the points of shell with Down South Lures and Bass Assassins. If you want both redfish and black drum take a bucket of live shrimp and work the points with a cork. There will be plenty of both in October.

If this year holds true to form, expect to see scattered bird action. Last year the bird action began in early October and continued through early December. There's no reason not to expect the same since we are seeing shrimp begin to flood the shorelines and our bait-shrimpers have had little problem keeping healthy bait supplies in tanks.

Please take care of our trout. I realize it sometimes seems like our trout population is booming when birds are working from east to west and just about eating the prop off your boat. However, this month, more than any, is a time to keep protecting our fish.

It is nauseating to see all the gut piles of dead carcasses at the cleaning table at Matagorda Harbor this time of year. Please release more than you keep. Most folks have the right attitude, but there is still work to be done to make our fishery world-class again.

I'll say it again – we can't continue to take, take, take from Matagorda Bay and expect the blessed waters to continue to give, give, give. That goes for just about every aspect of life, too.

We appreciate all our friends who have been on our boats and patronized Matagorda Sunrise Lodge. We look forward to many more sunrises together.

If you are looking to buy or sell coastal properties or farm and ranch dirt, Matagorda Sunrise Properties would love to assist. We give free advice.

Thank you Lord for the recent rain!

View The Video
Open Camera and hover over QR Code. When link appears at top of screen tap to open in YouTube.

Why October Is My Favorite Month

Octopus Facts You Likely Never Knew

By Brian Henry

There are more than 300 species of octopus found worldwide.

Those living in cold waters are larger than those found in warm waters.

Four new species of octopus were discovered in 2007 in Antarctica.

The plural of octopus is octopuses, not octopi.

Some species of octopus are plankton feeders.

The California octopus, less than an inch long, is the world's smallest.

All octopus and squid are deaf.

Octopus eggs are the size of a grain of rice.

Some smaller octopus lay eggs in bottles, cans, and clam shells lying on the ocean floor.

All newborn octopuses, even the largest, are the size of a pea.

Octopus are short-lived animals. Even the largest rarely live more than four years.

The Dumbo octopus, which lives 13,000 feet deep, was only discovered in 2008.

Octopus have about 2,000 suckers lining their limbs. Each one can separately grip objects, and some can lift heavy objects with only its suckers.

If a predator grabs an octopus's arm, it can expel the arm and escape. The arm will regenerate, like the claws of crabs.

A giant Pacific octopus weighing 100 pounds can squeeze through an opening the size of a lemon.

Octopus have learned to twist open jars to get food.

Octopus are amongst the few animals observed using tools, such as carrying coconut shells or other objects to hide in.

Octopus have been known to leave aquarium tanks, wander around, then return. They have also raided adjacent aquariums in a facility for food, then returned to their tank.

Jacques Cousteau once placed a lobster in a corked jar before an octopus. The octopus uncorked it and had a lobster dinner.

Giant Pacific octopus have been known to snatch seabirds from the water's surface, and also divers' cameras and equipment.

Squid, octopus and cuttlefish have large eyes similar to human eyes.

MID-COAST BAYS *With the Grays*

CAPT. GARY GRAY

Captain Gary Gray is a full time guide, born and raised in Seadrift. He has been guiding the Seadrift/Port O'Connor region since 1986. Gary specializes in year 'round wade fishing for speckled trout and redfish with artificial lures.

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September finally brought desperately-needed rainfall to the Coastal Bend and much of the state of Texas. The cooling effect on our bay waters will reenergize our fisheries, just in time for the fall migration of many forage species making their way to the gulf from the backwaters and marshes.

In the last couple of weeks I have seen little hints of the seasons changing. There was increased bird activity as they began working over shrimp in San Antonio, Mission, Hynes, and Guadalupe Bays. These migrations will really hit high gear when the first cold fronts arrive and we will begin catching upper-slot reds and trout. The shrimp migration can sometimes last well into December depending on water temperatures.

October strategies should not change a lot from those I used in September. The main difference will be that everything, or rather every type of fishing, will improve along with the quality of the fish we will be catching.

Fishing the many drains on the south shorelines of West Matagorda, Espiritu Santo, San Antonio, and Mesquite also tends to improve dramatically with the stronger tidal movements during fall. When fishing these drains I try to begin my wades as far out from the mouth of the drain as I can detect mullet or other baitfish milling around. I then work my way slowly toward the drain itself throwing my favorite lures – usually a Bass Assassin 4" Sea Shad or 5" Die Dapper – at primary bottom structure and any baitfish activity I can locate.

Fishing the birds in Upper San Antonio Bay really gets going with this month's increasingly frequent frontal systems. I recommend concentrating efforts on the northernmost end of San Antonio Bay, Hynes Bay to be more exact. Having said that, navigating these areas calls for heightened caution as there are sunken barges and other obstructions not marked on your GPS.

Hynes Bay is unique in that it is considered part of the Guadalupe estuary. The largest contributors of fresh water inflow are the San Antonio and Guadalupe rivers that merge a few miles upstream of the Guadalupe Delta. Hynes is a shallow bay, averaging 3- to 4-foot depths. Every fall, with the arrival of a few strong cold fronts, the shrimp that have been growing in the headwaters of the estuary migrate out into the open waters of Hynes, Mission, Guadalupe and San Antonio bays. Hynes is one of the first where this activity will be witnessed.

Once the shrimp have made it out into open bay the bird activity really explodes as they hover above schools of trout and reds feeding on the shrimp. Even birds that are simply resting on the water can be an excellent sign of bait and gamefish present in the area, likely a bit more scattered and not feeding aggressively, but they're still there.

Frenzied feeding tends to be at its best during early morning hours and usually subsides by midday. I should also mention that a north wind is always better than a south wind. Calm south winds won't hinder you too much, but if it's blowing hard from the south Hynes Bay will become muddied and not nearly as productive.

The best plan when you find the birds working aggressively is to motor upwind and then drift toward the activity to avoid spooking the fish. Better yet, if your boat is equipped with a trolling motor, use it to get within casting distance. Wading is hardly an option as the bottom of Hynes Bay is very soft and unforgiving. Besides that you may find yourself hopping from one school of feeding fish to another in a matter of minutes some days.

Another great way to enjoy fall fishing happens along the myriad upper and mid-bay oyster reefs of San Antonio Bay. Over the years I have learned to focus the majority of my effort on the side of the reef that tapers slowly into deeper water. This side of the reefs tends to hold more points and contours jutting from the main body of the reef, whereas the opposite side tends to drop off rather quickly into deeper water with mostly mud bottom.

Whether wading or drifting these reefs, my preferred baits are my trusty Salt Water Assassins in Purple Chicken, Magic Grass, and Laguna Shrimp. My favorite by far is the 4" Sea Shad on 1/16-ounce Assassin jigheads. I let the fish dictate the color.

There will be a variety of options during October; it's up to you to decide which scenario best fits your angling style.

Fish hard, fish smart!

It has been twenty years since Kees, Maarten, and David Verheul enjoyed a day together on the water.

You know the reds are thick when Dustin Dean snags one in the tail.

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I'm not sure whether we will have received the first real puff of north wind by the time this article reaches you but my fingers are crossed like a bowl of spaghetti pasta that serves a hundred people. Although I'm tall, thin and in pretty good shape, I am also a Type-2 diabetic. The meds and the heat just do not mix well with the disease and give me a good beatdown when I get too much of it. After months of hot weather I'm ready to get back in my Simms waders to chase heavy trout and not have the extra burden of heat acting as a monkey on my back.

October is a transition month, and not a favorite in Baffin for me, although I fully realize it's a solid month in the bays farther north along the coast. Here in Baffin it's still too hot to be too good, and not enough cold to make them into more predictable winter fish.

Looking forward to real fronts in November is where my mind is, with regards to Baffin, anyway. You will certainly catch some fish if you try, but I typically spend more time getting ready for the cold season, giving my body and mind a little rest before the diehards want to blast across the obstacle course of Baffin on cold mornings.

I'll use the bit of downtime to fine tune my gear from top to bottom. Here's a checklist of my routine, and one I hope my clients go through before they climb up on the Haynie.

-All Concept reels will be cleaned and serviced. I'll load a dozen of them with new 40-pound Seaguar Smackdown braid.

-My Waterloo rods will all get another protectant wipe down and shot of oil on reel seats to make sure they run smoothly.

-My spare Simms waders all get the "swimming pool" test to make sure no leaks have morphed from the cat using them as a scratching post.

-All my MirrOlure hardbaits with rusty hooks from the past season get replaced by BKK Fang trebles; along with a good cleaning of the baits themselves.

-Bass Assassin plastics get reorganized, replenished, and reordered where needed. I keep them in separate roll bags based on lure color and how it relates to water clarity.

-Cooler weather clothing, neck gaiters, gloves, etc., all get washed and ready to spend the next six months in a dry ice chest. I always have a waterproof bag on the boat loaded with a full set of warm clothes, towel, and extra set of waders for emergencies. You would be shocked how often I have to resort to this bag for myself or clients that get wet due to falls or leaky waders. Cold and wet is no joke…Be Prepared!

Well, that's what's in the boat, how about the boat itself? I'm a diehard Mercury man and only deal with Chris' Marine in Aransas Pass. The service there is like none other and how they earned my business many years ago. No one can touch them in that category. Luckily, for many of us, Chris Coulter also owns Haynie boats. It's custom, one-stop-shopping for the best of everything when it comes to coastal boats. I begin every season with a full service check, during which all outboard motor systems receive a full evaluation and tuning. Simple things like oil changes, spark plugs, and water pump impellers are too often overlooked by many fishermen…until they go bad. Use the time now to knock them out and skip the headaches on the water.

Another thing many folks overlook is First Aid in the event of an accident. Nothing really major here, but be ready for cuts, hooks in fingers or whatever, headaches, and even sick guts. My First Aid kit is stored in a waterproof box and includes aspirin and ibuprofen, anti-acid tablets, wound cleansing solution, antibiotic ointment, bandages, and waterproof tape. I also include a pair of angled wire cutters for clipping barbs when removing hooks; should anybody be so unlucky. Anything that cannot be treated adequately with the above sends us to the ER.

I'm giving y'all a head start in October, and I'm good with that. By now, you all understand the importance of catch and release and being good stewards of the bay if you ever want to have a CONSISTENT trophy fishery again. They'll never reach 31-inches if you kill them at 20! It's not rocket science.

Remember the buffalo! –Capt David Rowsey

Make your own luck! Todd Schoeffler does every time he comes to visit us from Louisiana. Many years on the water has him in that "high skill level" category. Always a pleasure to share the water with him.

View The Video
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WAYNE'S *Mansfield Report*

WAYNE DAVIS

Port Mansfield

Captain Wayne Davis has been fishing the Lower Laguna-Port Mansfield for over 20 years. He specializes in wade fishing with lures.

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Greetings from Port Mansfield! October kicks off some of the best fishing anybody could ask for. Very soon the caress of cooler weather will be felt all along the Texas coast. The flats of the Lower Laguna Madre will be teeming with baitfish and gamefish alike, and if you like that "knee deep" stuff as I do you will be in the right place at the right time.

Bait has been very plentiful all year and if you fish this month you will see what I'm talking about. Flats will be inundated with schools of mullet being crushed by angry reds and trout, and most will be easy to catch. If you are a topwater angler now is the time to tie one on. I'd suggest you work the outside edges of any pod of baitfish you find instead of throwing smack dab in the middle of them. Likewise, I would recommend the same strategy if you happen upon a school of redfish. Quite often, by working the edges you can easily pull a limit or more from a pod of 15 to 20 without busting them up too badly. The trick is to hook one from the edge and pull it away from the school. They might scatter a bit but soon enough you will see those coppery flags waving again as they resume their feeding. Heading into fall, this tailing and feeding activity is not just an early morning thing; we can expect it anytime during the day. With cooler temperatures and increased schooling tendency this time of year it seems they prefer to remain together as opposed to scattering. So, when you catch one or two, stick around a while. You might be in for a pleasant surprise.

In addition to good redfish action I am also very pleased with the recovery of the trout fishery in general, and the shape many of these fish are in here in late summer. Traditionally, during late August and throughout September our trout become pencil-thin, but not so much this year. I am impressed to see so many football-shaped trout coming to hand. This leads me to believe we could be in for a late fall and winter season with lots of trout weighing heavier than normal for length. We will just have to wait to see but that's my prediction as of now.

I have been mentioning flounder regularly, and at the risk of sounding like a broken record I feel that I need to touch on it yet again. Just about every trip continues to produce at least a few flounder, most are running 17 to 19 inches, with the occasional kicker of about four pounds. Excellent to see and I hope we have another cold winter (not too cold) so we can watch our flounder population carry over to next season.

Moving on to snook…what can I say? We started super strong in early summer but faded after a few weeks, and then struggled for about a month. This had me scratching my head but I remained determined to continue plugging away. Sure enough things started coming together on locating and hooking them, but landing them was another story. My groups and I landed only four out of twenty-four hookups. Pretty crummy ratio but that's the way it goes. I have even received a few remarks from my buddies over at Harte Research Institute about my landing ratio as I still have yet to tag ten this year. But being stubborn like a snook, we stayed the course and our luck improved dramatically. Two great fish came to hand recently, both over 10 pounds and 31 inches. No surprise, both came on Mansfield Knockers and both were tagged for my buddies at Harte.

Boat traffic will continue to diminish this month and I expect to see more girth on our trout and reds. Flounder season will be closed November 1 through December 14 and snook will have moved on, so my focus will shift toward locating and patterning larger trout for the upcoming winter season.

On another topic, God willing, I will be back in Brazil on another Amazon peacock bass adventure for most of October as I have back-to-back trips with two separate outfitters. Can't wait to show pics and provide reports on this. Stay tuned to both Texas Saltwater Fishing Magazine social media outlets and mine for updates during my Brazilian adventure.

Until next time stay safe out there and remember – Fresh is better than frozen!

US Attorney Britt Featherston also got in on the flounder action!

First Assistant US Attorney Matt Quinn with a great flounder while wading the flats.

View The Video
Open Camera and hover over QR Code. When link appears at top of screen tap to open in YouTube.

Daily Signs of Lower Laguna Trout Recovery

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SOUTH PADRE *Fishing Scene*

CAPT. ERNEST CISNEROS

Arroyo Colorado to Port Isabel

A Brownsville-area native, Capt. Ernest Cisneros fishes the Lower Laguna Madre from Port Mansfield to Port Isabel. Ernest specializes in wading and poled skiff adventures for snook, trout, and redfish.

Cell
956-266-6454
Website
www.tightlinescharters.com

The closer we draw to the winter months, the more excited I get about the prospects of tremendous winter fishing opportunity. October is not quite as cool as I prefer but it's a step in the right direction. The days will be growing shorter and our bay waters will cool into the mid-70° range. The fish we seek will begin to feed more aggressively and for longer periods; almost as though they know Old Man Winter is on his way.

October is an excellent month to take advantage of less-pressured waters and hungry fish. As the bay waters cool, the increased aggression in their feeding activity leads them to be more willing to chase a lure, quite different than summer when you almost have to bump them on the nose to get them to eat.

Redfish will be on the prowl, and their numbers should increase on the shallow grass flats. The tides in October will continue to be higher, compared to the summer months, and the floating grass should begin to dissipate this month.

For years I have observed that as fall approaches we find greater numbers of redfish congregating in the middle portion of the Lower Laguna Madre. I have always believed this was due to the greater abundance of mullet near the mouth of the Arroyo Colorado, which is why I focus much of my fall redfish efforts on the flats in that area. We typically find solid numbers of slot-sized reds and the tugs on the line are always welcome. Lately I have also been noticing many undersized redfish. Please handle these little fellows with the same respect and care you would give any larger ones you might be releasing as they are truly the future of the fishery.

Our trout fishery continues to show good progress in recovery since the freeze last February. Good evidence of this are reports of schools under the lights of the cabins along the ICW and Arroyo Colorado that include a mix of mostly undersize fish, but also with fair numbers of slot-sized keepers. For several months after the freeze not a single trout could be seen under any of the lights.

Results are similar on my charters, plenty of little ones, but almost every trip we catch a few trout in the mid to upper twenty-inch class. So, our trout fishery looks promising for the future, and hopefully, the upcoming winter trout season will be a good one.

Plastic baits are tricking most of our trout, and the slower you work them near bottom the more bites you will receive. Trout are stationed on sandy bottoms and will continue to be there in good numbers. The sand-to-grass transition line on the east side will soon turn on as the water temperatures drop and tides rise during October. Slicks continue to point the way to feeding activity and I expect this too will continue throughout the month.

Flounder landings have remained impressive, better perhaps than any year I can recall. Not so many big ones, but the sheer number of keeper-size fish has anglers excited about the future. Targeting them requires patience as well as presenting your lure slowly along the bottom. Productive locations have been along old oilfield cuts, edges of channels, and drains. If bagging a flounder or two for dinner is your goal I strongly recommend carrying a landing net. Even then, landing one is no guarantee. Flounder are notorious for only mouthing the bait and then releasing it when reeled to the surface.

Snook fishing has been steady with at least one angler, and sometimes all in the group, managing to land a linesider when we are targeting them. Most of these have been averaging three- to six-pounds and only very occasionally larger. Plastic baits have produced the higher percentage of landings when compared to topwaters. October is typically the last month this hard-fighting species will be consistently found on the flats. As soon as the water temps cool below 70° they begin heading to deeper and warmer water. Snook cannot thrive in water temperatures below 60° for long periods.

October gives us fabulous weather on the Lower Laguna with some of the prettiest evening skies along with comfortable air and water temperatures. After a long and hot summer the fishing improves dramatically. Add the fact than many anglers will be heading afield as deer, waterfowl, and other hunting activities take precedence over fishing. Diehard anglers wait all year for this!

Congratulations to Sean Horigan for landing his first Texas snook.

Justin Albert scored big with this 10-pound linesider.

View The Video
Open Camera and hover over QR Code. When link appears at top of screen tap to open in YouTube.

How I Decide Between Topwaters and Plastics

DEAR EDITOR — A CATCH TO REMEMBER

Abigail Webb of New Braunfels caught this swordfish 90 miles out of Matagorda, TX. It took her 1 hour and 40 mins to reel it in and was officially weighed at the Matagorda Harbor Bait & Tackle. Her 274.6-pound swordfish has been certified by TPWD as the Junior Progarm Offical State Record!

Science and the Sea™

Corals Lure Prey with Light

Deep below the ocean's surface, some corals emit an otherworldly glow called fluorescence, but for years, scientists have wondered about the purpose of these glowing colors. Among the hypotheses biologists have proposed is that fluorescence might optimize photosynthesis, shield against the sun's radiation, protect plant-eating marine life that lives among the corals, or attract algae that live inside the coral and provide them with energy through photosynthesis. Now, researchers have come up with a different hypothesis: fluorescence attracts the plankton that corals capture and eat.

Plankton that corals feed on are attracted to the coral's fluorescent glow. Credit: NOAA

Biologists in Israel conducted a series of experiments to determine if this new hypothesis held up. First, they tested whether fluorescence attracts plankton. In the lab, when tiny crustaceans called brine shrimp were given the choice between a green or orange fluorescent lure and a clear lure, they preferred the bright and colorful one. Yet when both lures were clear, the tiny creatures didn't show a preference. Fishes, which aren't coral prey, actually avoided the fluorescent lures, especially the orange ones. In experiments conducted the Red Sea, traps containing green and orange fluorescent lures brought in twice as much plankton as clear traps.

Then the researchers examined how effectively corals that live at nearly 150 feet deep could capture plankton. Less sunlight penetrates those depths, so corals cannot rely on photosynthesis by their symbiotic algae. Bringing these corals into the lab, the researchers compared the feeding success of corals with green fluorescence to corals with yellow fluorescence. When they used a light that suppressed the fluorescence, both types of corals caught similar amounts of prey. But under a light that enhanced the fluorescence, corals with green fluorescence snatched up 25 percent more plankton, suggesting their prey had a color preference. Together, these experiments showed that fluorescence helps make corals more effective predators.

www.ScienceAndTheSea.org

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Fishing Reports & Forecasts
from Big Lake to Boca Chica

Trinity Bay - East Bay - Galveston Bay | James Plaag
Silver King Adventures - silverkingadventures.com - 409.935.7242
September is a transitional month, and figuring out productive patterns can be tricky, as summer patterns wind down and fall patterns crank up. October is more consistent, with easier fishing in general, James says. "This month, we usually get strong enough fronts to kick the fall patterns off for good. We find good action on both trout and reds in the shallows this month, and wadefishing is preferred most of the time. Areas close to places where shrimp spend the summer produce well, meaning the back-lakes and coves on both sides of West Bay. Working birds will betray the locations of migrating herds, but people who fish places with lots of mullet and other bait jumping in the shallows in the areas where birds are working usually catch more reds and some of the bigger trout. Small topwaters like the pink She Pup work great this time of year; both trout and reds love 'em. And, of course, soft plastics that look like shrimp are a safe bet for folks who don't like to work topwaters. At the beginning of the month, the potential for catching silver kings remains high. Some years, after mild fronts in October, tarpon are thick in the nearshore waters."

Jimmy West - Bolivar Guide Service - 409.996.3054
Fishing picks up nicely once October rolls around, Jim says. "We've still been catching best out on the middle, working slicks around the reefs. There's been a few birds working, but most of the trout under the flocks are dinks. Once we get some cooler weather, the fish will move into the backs of the bays, into shallower water, and we'll be able to catch 'em by wading most of the time. The topwater bite this month is usually really good. We catch well around the drains and in the bayous and lakes too, once the bull tide arrives and water temperatures cool down some. The key to catching this month is often to go early or stay late. The fish bite best around daybreak and again at dusk on a lot of days. So far, even with all the heavy rains around the state during August and early September, we haven't had too much of a problem with runoff coming down the Trinity River. If the bays stay mostly salty, we're set up for some good fall fishing, especially when we're targeting numbers of trout. I'll also be gearing up for duck season during October, and hunting doves too."

West Galveston - Bastrop - Christmas - Chocolate Bays
Randall Groves - Groves Guide Service
979.849.7019 - 979.864.9323
The shorter days and longer nights in October bring cooler air to the Texas Coast. Cold fronts passing over the coastal waters cause the tide levels to fluctuate over a large range. We typically have high tides, and marshes full of water, but when strong cold fronts cause the water to dump out of these areas, the shrimp begin moving toward the Gulf. When that happens, we find plenty of gulls hovering over the moving herds of shrimp, and fishing can be fast and furious for trout. I do best culling keepers out of the schools throwing black and gold Skitter Walks with the orange belly. If the fish want soft plastics instead of topwaters, I'll be throwing my trusty Norton Sand Eels in natural colors like tequila gold. We rig them on three-eighths ounce heads, and usually catch a mix of trout and reds in this scenario. We also have excellent luck catching reds on the shorelines and patch reefs in the back-lakes, sometimes on topwaters, other times on soft plastics. This pattern produces best when the marsh is full. We often find the hunting reds in those areas by keying on diving terns, also wading birds like herons and egrets.

Matagorda | Bay Guide Service
Tommy Countz – Matagorda Bays – 979.863.7553 cell 281.450.4037
Tommy mentions October as his favorite month to fish in the Matagorda area. "It's nicer for the fish and for us. The cooler temperatures allow everybody to perform better. This month, we usually have reliable things, like the shrimp migration. Once the tides and temperatures fall, and the shrimp dump out of the backwater areas into the bays, we'll have birds working over the herds. This makes for easier fishing than what we typically experience throughout the hot months. This year, after all the late rain, we should have a big shrimp crop. We also have excellent fishing for redfish in the shallow nooks and crannies in both bays this month. Finding the hunting pods on the shorelines is a bit more like hunting than fishing, in some ways. Keying on the right signs allows us to see where the pods are, then set up to intercept them as they come toward us. This means we're often able to throw topwaters in front of them and experience the blow ups. Few things are more fun than watching slot reds tackle small topwaters. This is also a great time to target reds with flies, in the clear, shallow water."

Palacios | Capt. Aaron Wollam
www.palaciosguideservice.com - 979.240.8204
Heavy rains in August broke the drought and sent freshwater flowing down our rivers, flushing the fish out and improving our fishing. The reds have been stacked along shorelines adjacent to drains, chasing schools of shrimp in herds of five to ten fish. We've been catching them best on live shrimp rigged about a foot under popping corks. We're also catching some on paddletails in pumpkinseed/chartreuse, rigged on quarter-ounce heads. The key to catching them on the lures is to cast right in front of the hunting pods. The trout bite has been a bit off, but we've had a good run catching really big sand trout, up to thirteen or fourteen inches. They're hanging around deep structures, biting live shrimp dangled about three feet under popping corks. Flounder gigging has recently picked up momentum, with plenty of locals sticking fish to about eighteen inches when winds are light in the evenings. The amount of bait in our bays right now is epic, which bodes well for the fishing this fall. We should start to see birds working on a regular basis, and bigger schools of aggressive reds. Things look really promising for the months of October and beyond.

Port O'Connor | Lynn Smith
Back Bay Guide Service - 361.983.4434
Lynn says the surf has produced the best fishing for trout throughout the summer, and he hopes to continue fishing out there some through October, if conditions allow. "We'll also fish some of the guts and flats close to the jetties and the pass. In October, we usually get some really high tides, and some of the fish in the surf ride the tide into the bays in places like that. It's a great time of year to catch some solid trout on topwaters around grass beds on sandy flats in such a situation. The flats adjacent to Cedar Bayou in Mesquite Bay offer similar potential for catching trout coming in out of the surf. When tides are less high and strong, we often do better this time of year fishing reefs in bays like Carlos, San Antonio and Espiritu Santo. We catch well on topwaters there at times,

usually when winds are light and we have some cloud cover, but soft plastics work better around the shell, on average. Fishing for reds in the back-lakes and coves is often good this time of year too. High tides make accessing the areas easier, but low tides concentrate the fish better."

Rockport | Blake Muirhead
Gator Trout Guide Service - 361.790.5203 or 361.441.3894

Blake looks forward to some fun fishing and hunting opportunities in October. "We usually have high tides this month. When we do, I like to fish some of the shorelines and reefs close to shore in places like Mesquite and San Antonio bays, and the smaller bays near those. When fishing the shorelines, I throw topwaters quite a bit, right close to the grass on the bank. I won't hesitate to throw soft plastics in dark colors like pumpkinseed and plum/chartreuse, also white/chartreuse, on light jigheads. Those lures work a little better, on average, around the reefs, though the topwaters work well there sometimes too. As far as hunting goes, I'm expecting some good dove hunting this month. With all the rain we've had, I've got some fields producing crops. So there's plenty of food to attract the doves. And, all the rain has left plenty of water standing in the ag fields too. This provides places for the ducks to get a drink every day, so the birds that show up in the Rockport area tend to stick around better. So, I'll be scouting the area, looking for arriving ducks this month, in advance of the season, which starts in November."

Upper Laguna Madre - Baffin Bay - Land Cut
Robert Zapata – rz1528@grandecom.net - 361.563.1160

The action in our part of the Laguna Madre and in Baffin Bay continues to receive high ratings from me. We're catching plenty of trout and redfish in both these local bay systems. The best numbers of keeper trout have been biting early in the mornings in two to three feet of water. I've been catching them easiest on Assassin Die Dappers in colors like chicken on a chain and salt and pepper/chartreuse rigged on sixteenth-ounce Assassin Spring-lock jigheads, attached to the end of about twenty inches of fluorocarbon leader line. The trout prefer areas with plenty of potholes breaking up the grassy bottoms, and the edges of grass lines, closer to a little deeper water. Live shrimp rigged about fifteen inches below popping corks in these same areas are also producing plenty of bites from both trout and reds. We're finding both black and red drum are schooling around grassy drop offs; they're biting the same Die Dappers rigged on eighth-ounce heads. We're also sight-casting decent numbers of black drum and redfish using shrimp-flavored Fish-bites in less than a foot of water in areas with really clear water, when winds are light to moderate, allowing us to see into the water.

Corpus Christi | Joe Mendez – www.sightcast1.com - 361.877.1230

October generally provides good weather and fun fishing opportunities for anglers in the Corpus Christi area, according to Joe. "We get plenty of calmer, cooler days starting this month. It's fun to be on the ULM and in Baffin when the air is crisp this time of year. Fishing can be great at times, especially when light winds make for a good topwater bite early in the mornings. More of the time, we catch best by throwing soft plastics at grass beds and potholes right close to the banks, or on the shallow parts of spoils. This time of year, we have tons and tons of mullet, pinfish and other food sources for the trout and reds, so throwing lures which don't really look a lot like little fish sometimes works better than trying to match the hatch. Dark soft plastics with bright tails fit that description well. In some scenarios, when skies are bright and we have moderate winds, we're able to sight-cast plenty of black and red drum and a few big trout, usually around potholes breaking up the bottom on grassy flats covered by shallow water, reeling in paddletails slowly and steadily in front of their noses."

P.I.N.S. Fishing Forecast | Eric Ozolins
361-877-3583 | Oceanepics.com

After a scorching summer, the migrations that begin along the beaches in cooling weather are welcome. Mullet and menhaden should be running the surf in large numbers this month. The predators will follow them. We generally see increased amounts of red drum along the beachfront this time of year. Late in the month, the average size becomes really impressive. Jack crevalle show up early on cool mornings a day or so after a cold front. Live mullet works well to target both these species, as do lures like large spoons, topwaters and swim baits. Tarpon should be lurking in the surf this month too, gorging on easy meals before heading south for the winter. Smaller tarpon will take live mullet, but fresh dead skipjacks work better to entice the big ones. Bull and blacktip sharks will be the two main shark species wreaking havoc in the shallows. Spanish mackerel and bluefish will make appearances when water clarity is good; they love eating the mullet too. Both these species have sharp teeth, creating a need for tough leader materials. October is a great month to try the fishing on the beach, because of the pleasant weather and the variety of species to target.

Port Mansfield | Ruben Garza
Snookdudecharters.com – 832.385.1431
Getaway Adventures Lodge – 956.944.4000

In the Lower Laguna Madre, the seasonal redfish run is in full swing, with the typical high tides heading into the equinox. We're finding schools on both sides of the East Cut, moving around over a sandy bottom, early in the mornings. As the day progresses, the pods of mullet move out of the shallows and into deeper water, and the reds follow. Topwaters are working well some of the time to get the interest of the reds. If topwaters don't work, KWiggler paddletails or gold, weedless spoons usually do. With lighter winds and green water in play more often, trout action should pick up in West Bay and around The Saucer. They'll bite best in potholes about two or three feet deep. On the west shoreline, the action should be good from Tio Moya Pier to the mouth of Little Bay. Soft plastics rigged on eighth-ounce heads should earn the most strikes from the trout. Fishing around the jetties for reds, kings, sharks and jacks should be steady on days when the waves aren't too big. Out there, diving gulls and pelicans normally signal the presence of food for the predators. Wire leaders are suggested out around the rocks.

Lower Laguna Madre - South Padre - Port Isabel
Aaron Cisneros | tightlinescharters.com – 956-639-1941

"We've had good fishing in the Lower Laguna Madre recently, finding fish schooling in large numbers. The trout have mostly been hanging out in deeper water, ranging from three to about five feet deep. We're catching excellent numbers from fifteen to about twenty-five inches, mostly using Mansfield Margarita KWiggler Ball-tails rigged on quarter-ounce heads, working them low and slow, so they stay close to the bottom. The slower retrieves seem to be helping us cull the bigger fish out of the schools. Faster retrieves worked closer to the surface have been attracting more dinks. The redfish have been schooling close to shorelines, tight to the emergent grass, as we've had some really high tides. Oyster reefs have also been holding good numbers of reds. We're working hard to find concentrations of bait, since the high tides have scattered our fish somewhat. High tides also float grass off the mats, so we've had some issues with floating grass, and we're dealing with them by rigging topwaters with single hooks, and throwing eighth-ounce weedless gold spoons. Throughout the rest of the fall, finding places with concentrations of bait will be the key to locating the trout and reds."

CATCH OF THE MONTH

Morgan Barretto - Port Mansfield
6 lb personal best trout!

Jase Imhoff
POC - first redfish!

Kilee Smart
POC - first trout!

Lin Hutzenbiler
POC - 35" personal best redfish! CPR

Estelle Olvera
Sargent - 38" bull red CPR

Joe Spurgin, Sr.
Lower Laguna - 28" trout CPR

Joe Spurgin, Jr.
Lower Laguna Madre - 29" red

Jaime Quiroga
Lower Laguna Madre - 25" red

Juan Oyervides
Corpus Christi Bay - 42" redfish

Andrew Ibarra
Rockport - 17" sheepshead

Brandon Clark
POC - 39" redfish

Mark Wilkerson
Offshore - black fin tuna

Garrett Johnson with father, Mike
Bolivar Peninsula - 39.5" first bull red!

Juan Perez
West Galveston Bay - 21.75" trout

Remington - Bastrop Bay - first trout! CPR

Michael Barrera
Port Aransas - 42" redfish

Harper Bearden
Jamaica Beach - first sheepshead!

Addison Bearden
Jamaica Beach - first black drum!

Brad Sutton
Galveston Bay - redfish CPR

Brian Sutton
Galveston Bay - redfish CPR

Tom Walsh
Seabrook Flats - redfish

Melanie Grantham
Seadrift - 50 lb black drum CPR

Stefan Lemire
Chinquapin - 5.5' alligator gar

Maria Morones - Aransas Pass jetties - 25" red

Jonah & William Klemcke
double reds - San Jose Island

Tyler & Travis Christiansen
Larry's Harbor - black drum CPR

Robert Burns
Galveston north jetty - black drum

Gus Forrester & grandmother, Mary Lil Chappell
Packery Channel - 22" redfish

Photo Gallery Guidelines

First come – first published!
Photos are judged on artistic merit and sporting ethic displayed. ***No stringer, cleaning table, or hanging board images allowed.*** Digital images only. Adjust camera to high or best quality. All images become property of TSFMag. **Email to: Photos@TSFMag.com**
Include short description of your catch with name, date, bay system, etc.

Gulf Coast Kitchen

PAM JOHNSON

Got ideas, hints or recipes you'd like to share? Email them to pam@tsfmag.com or send by fax: 361 792-4530

Redfish Sandwich Spread

I am always searching for new ways to enjoy the fish we catch and this one is incredibly easy and delicious. We often take it along to make sandwiches on the boat...all you need is some lettuce and a couple slices of bread for a quick lunch on the water. Also great as a dip served with crackers!

INGREDIENTS

- Two medium redfish fillets, always remove blood line
- 2 chopped hard-boiled eggs
- ¼ cup chopped dill pickles
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ½ cup Hellman's mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp crushed red pepper
- Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

Boil redfish fillets until fully cooked and easily flaked, drain and crumble, then place in mixing bowl.

Add eggs, pickles, onions, celery, mayonnaise, mustard, red pepper, salt, pepper and fold to combine.

Refrigerate for a couple of hours before serving on crackers or as a sandwich.

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CHRIS MAPP

REPAIR & MAINTENANCE

BOAT TRAILER MAINTENANCE BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

Over the last six weeks we have seen a flurry of boat trailer repairs, more than we've experienced in quite some time. In most owners minds, trailer maintenance is re-packing wheel bearings and inspecting running lights; but there's a lot more.

Aluminum trailers can last a very long time but the life expectancy of torsion axles is generally seven or eight years. Experience teaches that the center portion of the axle, the curved section in the middle, can trap saltwater. Corrosion occurs inside the galvanized tubing, which can weaken it to the point of failure.

Another area of concern is where the axle bolts to the frame. The bolts are stainless steel and the trailer is aluminum. The dissimilarity of these materials creates oxidation that eats away and weakens the aluminum. This process typically goes unnoticed unless the trailer is inspected without the boat on it. The result can be very severe and dangerous if left untreated.

Trailer wiring replacement should be included during any major repair work. Non-tinned copper wiring breaks down internally because the wire acts like a wick, allowing saltwater to creep inside and degrade the copper strands.

No one wants to be "that guy" on the side of the road when the wheels come off, or axles snap.

Have a safe and successful fall fishing season!

Chris Mapp

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Torsion axle corrosion occurs over time in this area.

Corrosion also occurs where the axle is bolted to the frame.

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TEXAS SALTWATER® FISHING MAGAZINE

SOLUNAR TABLE
OCTOBER 2022

Brought to you by Shallow Sport®

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Sun R:07:14AM S:07:07PM Moon R:01:11PM S:11:20PM Majors 04:49AM–06:49AM 05:15PM–07:15PM Minors 12:41PM–01:41PM 10:50PM–11:50PM ★ ★
2 First Qtr Sun R:07:15AM S:07:05PM Moon R:02:16PM Majors 05:53AM–07:53AM 06:19PM–08:19PM Minors 01:46PM–02:46PM ★ ★ ★	3 Sun R:07:16AM S:07:04PM Moon S:12:22AM R:03:15PM Majors 06:48AM–08:48AM 07:14PM–09:14PM Minors 11:52PM–12:52AM 02:45PM–03:45PM ★	4 Sun R:07:16AM S:07:03PM Moon S:01:29AM R:04:06PM Majors 07:48AM–09:48AM 08:14PM–10:14PM Minors 12:59AM–01:59AM 03:36PM–04:36PM	5 Sun R:07:17AM S:07:02PM Moon S:02:38AM R:04:51PM Majors 08:44AM–10:44AM 09:10PM–11:10PM Minors 02:08AM–03:08AM 04:21PM–05:21PM	6 Sun R:07:17AM S:07:01PM Moon S:03:46AM R:05:29PM Majors 09:38AM–11:38AM 10:04PM–12:04AM Minors 03:16AM–04:16AM 04:59PM–05:59PM	7 Sun R:07:18AM S:07:00PM Moon S:04:53AM R:06:04PM Majors 10:28AM–12:28PM 10:54PM–12:54AM Minors 04:23AM–05:23AM 05:34PM–06:34PM	8 Sun R:07:18AM S:06:58PM Moon S:05:57AM R:06:36PM Majors 11:16AM–01:16PM Minors 05:27AM–06:27AM 06:06PM–07:06PM ★
9 Sun R:07:19AM S:06:57PM Moon S:06:59AM R:07:07PM Majors 12:03PM–02:03PM Minors 06:29AM–07:29AM 06:37PM–07:37PM ★ ★	10 Full Sun R:07:20AM S:06:56PM Moon S:08:00AM R:07:38PM Majors 12:23AM–02:23AM 12:49PM–02:49PM Minors 07:30AM–08:30AM 07:08PM–08:08PM ★ ★ ★	11 Sun R:07:20AM S:06:55PM Moon S:09:01AM R:08:11PM Majors 01:10AM–03:10AM 01:36PM–03:36PM Minors 08:31AM–09:31AM 07:41PM–08:41PM	12 Sun R:07:21AM S:06:54PM Moon S:10:02AM R:08:47PM Majors 01:58AM–03:58AM 02:24PM–04:24PM Minors 09:32AM–10:32AM 08:17PM–09:17PM	13 Sun R:07:22AM S:06:53PM Moon S:11:02AM R:09:27PM Majors 02:48AM–04:48AM 03:14PM–05:14PM Minors 10:32AM–11:32AM 08:57PM–09:57PM	14 Sun R:07:22AM S:06:52PM Moon S:12:00PM R:10:11PM Majors 03:40AM–05:40AM 04:06PM–06:06PM Minors 11:30AM–12:30PM 09:41PM–10:41PM	15 Sun R:07:23AM S:06:51PM Moon S:12:56PM R:11:00PM Majors 04:32AM–06:32AM 04:58PM–06:58PM Minors 12:26PM–01:26PM 10:30PM–11:30PM ★
16 Sun R:07:23AM S:06:49PM Moon S:01:47PM R:11:53PM Majors 05:24AM–07:24AM 05:50PM–07:50PM Minors 01:17PM–02:17PM 11:23PM–12:23AM ★ ★	17 Last Qtr Sun R:07:24AM S:06:48PM Moon S:02:34PM Majors 06:13AM–08:13AM 06:39PM–08:39PM Minors 02:04PM–03:04PM ★ ★ ★	18 Sun R:07:25AM S:06:47PM Moon R:12:48AM S:03:15PM Majors 07:02AM–09:02AM 07:28PM–09:28PM Minors 12:18AM–01:18AM 02:45PM–03:45PM ★	19 Sun R:07:25AM S:06:46PM Moon R:01:45AM S:03:51PM Majors 07:48AM–09:48AM 08:14PM–10:14PM Minors 01:15AM–02:15AM 03:21PM–04:21PM	20 Sun R:07:26AM S:06:45PM Moon R:02:43AM S:04:24PM Majors 08:34AM–10:34AM 09:00PM–11:00PM Minors 02:13AM–03:13AM 03:54PM–04:54PM ★	21 Sun R:07:27AM S:06:44PM Moon R:03:40AM S:04:55PM Majors 09:17AM–11:17AM 09:43PM–11:43PM Minors 03:10AM–04:10AM 04:25PM–05:25PM ★ ★	22 Sun R:07:27AM S:06:43PM Moon R:04:37AM S:05:24PM Majors 10:01AM–12:01PM 10:27PM–12:27AM Minors 04:07AM–05:07AM 04:54PM–05:54PM ★ ★ ★
23 Sun R:07:28AM S:06:42PM Moon R:05:35AM S:05:54PM Majors 10:45AM–12:45PM Minors 05:05AM–06:05AM 05:24PM–06:24PM ★ ★ ★ ★	24 New Sun R:07:29AM S:06:41PM Moon R:06:35AM S:06:25PM Majors 11:30AM–01:30PM Minors 06:05AM–07:05AM 05:55PM–06:55PM ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	25 Sun R:07:30AM S:06:40PM Moon R:07:38AM S:06:58PM Majors 12:18PM–02:18PM Minors 07:08AM–08:08AM 06:28PM–07:28PM ★ ★ ★	26 Sun R:07:30AM S:06:40PM Moon R:08:43AM S:07:37PM Majors 12:44AM–02:44AM 01:10PM–03:10PM Minors 08:13AM–09:13AM 07:07PM–08:07PM ★	27 Sun R:07:31AM S:06:39PM Moon R:09:52AM S:08:22PM Majors 01:41AM–03:41AM 02:07PM–04:07PM Minors 09:22AM–10:22AM 07:52PM–08:52PM	28 Sun R:07:32AM S:06:38PM Moon R:11:01AM S:09:14PM Majors 02:42AM–04:42AM 03:08PM–05:08PM Minors 10:31AM–11:31AM 08:44PM–09:44PM	29 Sun R:07:32AM S:06:37PM Moon R:12:09PM S:10:15PM Majors 03:46AM–05:46AM 04:12PM–06:12PM Minors 11:39AM–12:39PM 09:45PM–10:45PM ★
30 Sun R:07:33AM S:06:36PM Moon R:01:11PM S:11:21PM Majors 04:50AM–06:50AM 05:16PM–07:16PM Minors 12:41PM–01:41PM 10:51PM–11:51PM ★ ★	31 First Qtr Sun R:07:34AM S:06:35PM Moon R:02:05PM Majors 05:51AM–07:51AM 06:17PM–08:17PM Minors 01:35PM–02:35PM ★ ★ ★					

Galveston Bay Entrance N. Jetty
29.3573°N, −94.7248°W
October 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 02:08 PM −0.019 L 11:32 PM 2.189 H
2 03:11 PM −0.040 L	3 01:01 AM 2.235 H 04:19 PM −0.001 L	4 01:59 AM 2.229 H 05:37 PM 0.083 L	5 02:38 AM 2.161 H 06:53 PM 0.198 L	6 03:09 AM 2.053 H 08:49 AM 1.608 L 12:29 PM 1.760 H 07:57 PM 0.359 L	7 03:34 AM 1.935 H 09:04 AM 1.386 L 02:13 PM 1.843 H 08:56 PM 0.573 L	8 03:56 AM 1.832 H 09:29 AM 1.119 L 03:34 PM 1.943 H 09:58 PM 0.815 L
9 04:14 AM 1.760 H 10:03 AM 0.843 L 04:43 PM 2.035 H 10:59 PM 1.058 L	10 04:28 AM 1.719 H 10:38 AM 0.592 L 05:44 PM 2.098 H 11:52 PM 1.290 L	11 04:36 AM 1.706 H 11:13 AM 0.394 L 06:44 PM 2.122 H	12 12:43 AM 1.501 L 04:38 AM 1.713 H 11:48 AM 0.265 L 07:52 PM 2.124 H	13 01:54 AM 1.674 L 04:35 AM 1.734 H 12:24 PM 0.210 L 09:08 PM 2.125 H	14 01:03 PM 0.219 L 10:16 PM 2.122 H	15 01:50 PM 0.275 L 11:30 PM 2.108 H
16 02:45 PM 0.356 L	17 12:56 AM 2.095 H 03:46 PM 0.442 L	18 01:48 AM 2.071 H 04:54 PM 0.527 L	19 02:20 AM 2.023 H 06:06 PM 0.603 L	20 02:42 AM 1.959 H 08:47 AM 1.510 L 10:49 AM 1.540 H 07:05 PM 0.685 L	21 02:57 AM 1.891 H 08:51 AM 1.378 L 01:11 PM 1.571 H 07:51 PM 0.792 L	22 03:08 AM 1.830 H 09:01 AM 1.194 L 02:32 PM 1.670 H 08:35 PM 0.934 L
23 03:13 AM 1.786 H 09:16 AM 0.963 L 03:39 PM 1.801 H 09:23 PM 1.104 L	24 03:17 AM 1.765 H 09:37 AM 0.700 L 04:38 PM 1.951 H 10:21 PM 1.292 L	25 03:25 AM 1.764 H 10:06 AM 0.425 L 05:32 PM 2.095 H 11:22 PM 1.486 L	26 03:36 AM 1.780 H 10:41 AM 0.167 L 06:27 PM 2.206 H	27 12:20 AM 1.681 L 03:45 AM 1.814 H 11:19 AM −0.041 L 07:33 PM 2.274 H	28 12:01 PM −0.171 L 08:52 PM 2.313 H	29 12:48 PM −0.203 L 10:06 PM 2.321 H
30 01:44 PM −0.138 L 11:16 PM 2.285 H	31 02:50 PM 0.001 L					

Port O'Connor Matagorda Bay
28.4459°N, −96.3956°W
October 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 04:25 AM 0.854 H 04:15 PM −0.160 L
2 05:20 AM 0.906 H 05:43 PM −0.164 L	3 06:17 AM 0.923 H 07:07 PM −0.163 L	4 07:13 AM 0.902 H 08:18 PM −0.143 L	5 08:00 AM 0.841 H 09:20 PM −0.090 L	6 08:19 AM 0.740 H 10:16 PM 0.002 L	7 08:01 AM 0.615 H 11:07 PM 0.129 L	8 07:26 AM 0.496 H 11:32 AM 0.417 L 04:27 PM 0.512 H 11:55 PM 0.277 L
9 05:23 AM 0.434 H 11:58 AM 0.244 L 07:54 PM 0.552 H	10 12:44 AM 0.430 L 04:02 AM 0.486 H 12:29 PM 0.087 L 09:42 PM 0.639 H	11 01:02 PM −0.036 L 11:08 PM 0.720 H	12 01:38 PM −0.113 L	13 12:53 AM 0.777 H 02:18 PM −0.140 L	14 02:50 AM 0.820 H 03:05 PM −0.127 L	15 03:48 AM 0.839 H 04:05 PM −0.089 L
16 04:34 AM 0.839 H 05:19 PM −0.050 L	17 05:14 AM 0.824 H 06:29 PM −0.019 L	18 05:47 AM 0.799 H 07:22 PM 0.011 L	19 06:09 AM 0.763 H 08:04 PM 0.051 L	20 06:18 AM 0.714 H 08:40 PM 0.108 L	21 06:13 AM 0.650 H 09:17 PM 0.188 L	22 05:49 AM 0.575 H 10:05 PM 0.291 L
23 04:54 AM 0.508 H 11:38 AM 0.293 L 06:45 PM 0.468 H 11:09 PM 0.412 L	24 03:33 AM 0.494 H 11:37 AM 0.152 L 08:37 PM 0.587 H	25 12:29 AM 0.538 L 02:34 AM 0.550 H 11:58 AM 0.006 L 09:53 PM 0.707 H	26 12:30 PM −0.121 L 11:07 PM 0.803 H	27 01:12 PM −0.211 L	28 01:07 AM 0.871 H 02:02 PM −0.255 L	29 03:14 AM 0.932 H 03:03 PM −0.259 L
30 04:15 AM 0.965 H 04:17 PM −0.234 L	31 05:05 AM 0.959 H 05:35 PM −0.192 L					

LEGEND

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MOON OVER/ MOON UNDER

MAJOR FEEDING PERIODS, +/- 2 HRS

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Please note that the tides listed in this table are for the Galveston Channel. The Tidal Corrections can be applied to the areas affected by the Galveston tide.

For other locations, i.e. Port O'Connor, Port Aransas, Corpus Christi and Port Isabel please refer to the charts displayed below.

Port Aransas
27.8397°N, −97.0725°W
October 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 01:35 AM 1.092 H 01:43 PM −0.130 L
2 02:51 AM 1.171 H 02:40 PM −0.150 L	3 03:42 AM 1.206 H 03:55 PM −0.128 L	4 04:25 AM 1.187 H 05:29 PM −0.092 L	5 05:03 AM 1.109 H 06:48 PM −0.047 L	6 05:32 AM 0.981 H 08:30 AM 0.914 L 11:29 AM 0.984 H 07:54 PM 0.032 L	7 03:30 AM 0.846 H 08:32 AM 0.763 L 12:58 PM 0.999 H 08:54 PM 0.158 L	8 03:09 AM 0.778 H 08:54 AM 0.580 L 02:25 PM 1.016 H 09:53 PM 0.325 L
9 03:00 AM 0.756 H 09:27 AM 0.390 L 03:53 PM 1.032 H 10:57 PM 0.510 L	10 03:10 AM 0.771 H 10:06 AM 0.215 L 05:23 PM 1.045 H	11 12:06 AM 0.686 L 03:24 AM 0.807 H 10:48 AM 0.072 L 07:06 PM 1.059 H	12 01:25 AM 0.832 L 03:28 AM 0.856 H 11:30 AM −0.028 L 09:22 PM 1.092 H	13 12:11 PM −0.081 L 11:20 PM 1.129 H	14 12:50 PM −0.089 L	15 12:41 AM 1.136 H 01:30 PM −0.059 L
16 02:03 AM 1.124 H 02:13 PM −0.004 L	17 03:08 AM 1.099 H 03:05 PM 0.064 L	18 03:53 AM 1.057 H 04:13 PM 0.130 L	19 04:26 AM 0.994 H 05:36 PM 0.181 L	20 04:46 AM 0.911 H 06:43 PM 0.226 L	21 02:48 AM 0.841 H 08:28 AM 0.717 L 12:09 PM 0.826 H 07:37 PM 0.291 L	22 02:07 AM 0.804 H 08:32 AM 0.596 L 01:24 PM 0.856 H 08:26 PM 0.389 L
23 01:51 AM 0.803 H 08:49 AM 0.452 L 02:38 PM 0.899 H 09:15 PM 0.520 L	24 02:04 AM 0.819 H 09:10 AM 0.293 L 03:48 PM 0.950 H 10:11 PM 0.672 L	25 02:18 AM 0.849 H 09:35 AM 0.133 L 04:57 PM 0.999 H 11:20 PM 0.824 L	26 02:24 AM 0.897 H 10:09 AM −0.015 L 06:44 PM 1.042 H	27 10:52 AM −0.136 L 10:45 PM 1.113 H	28 11:40 AM −0.216 L 11:57 PM 1.183 H	29 12:31 PM −0.248 L
30 01:13 AM 1.213 H 01:25 PM −0.226 L	31 02:24 AM 1.207 H 02:26 PM −0.151 L					

South Padre - Brazos Santiago Pass
26.0674°N, −97.1548°W
October 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 01:22 PM 0.223 L
2 12:46 AM 2.151 H 02:28 PM 0.189 L	3 01:58 AM 2.207 H 03:41 PM 0.200 L	4 02:53 AM 2.190 H 05:00 PM 0.253 L	5 03:32 AM 2.093 H 06:17 PM 0.350 L	6 03:48 AM 1.928 H 07:26 PM 0.504 L	7 03:40 AM 1.739 H 08:34 AM 1.510 L 12:50 PM 1.717 H 08:30 PM 0.716 L	8 03:21 AM 1.585 H 08:42 AM 1.240 L 02:32 PM 1.769 H 09:31 PM 0.966 L
9 03:09 AM 1.500 H 09:05 AM 0.958 L 04:01 PM 1.843 H 10:37 PM 1.220 L	10 03:03 AM 1.482 H 09:35 AM 0.705 L 05:22 PM 1.917 H 11:58 PM 1.442 L	11 02:52 AM 1.513 H 10:08 AM 0.511 L 06:42 PM 1.972 H	12 10:44 AM 0.388 L 08:17 PM 2.008 H	13 11:22 AM 0.333 L 10:06 PM 2.040 H	14 12:04 PM 0.336 L 11:31 PM 2.066 H	15 12:51 PM 0.378 L
16 12:37 AM 2.073 H 01:45 PM 0.442 L	17 01:32 AM 2.058 H 02:45 PM 0.512 L	18 02:15 AM 2.017 H 03:52 PM 0.582 L	19 02:44 AM 1.945 H 05:02 PM 0.654 L	20 02:56 AM 1.844 H 06:09 PM 0.739 L	21 02:50 AM 1.726 H 09:05 AM 1.409 L 12:05 PM 1.469 H 07:09 PM 0.851 L	22 02:34 AM 1.615 H 08:32 AM 1.261 L 01:40 PM 1.547 H 08:06 PM 0.994 L
23 02:19 AM 1.529 H 08:29 AM 1.049 L 03:00 PM 1.661 H 09:06 PM 1.162 L	24 02:08 AM 1.479 H 08:44 AM 0.808 L 04:11 PM 1.794 H 10:14 PM 1.343 L	25 01:57 AM 1.473 H 09:10 AM 0.563 L 05:18 PM 1.921 H	26 09:43 AM 0.341 L 06:29 PM 2.022 H	27 10:24 AM 0.163 L 08:00 PM 2.094 H	28 11:11 AM 0.046 L 09:54 PM 2.156 H	29 12:06 PM 0.000 L 11:25 PM 2.200 H
30 01:08 PM 0.024 L	31 12:32 AM 2.193 H 02:16 PM 0.112 L					

Tidal Corrections

Location	High	Low
Calcasieu Pass, La.	-2:14	-1:24
Sabine Bank Lighthouse	-1:46	-1:31
Sabine Pass (jetty)	-1:26	-1:31
Sabine Pass	-1:00	-1:15
Mesquite Point	-0:04	-0:25
Galveston Bay (S. jetty)	-0:39	-1:05
Port Bolivar	+0:14	-0:06
Texas City, Turning Basin	+0:33	+0:41
Eagle Point	+3:54	+4:15
Clear Lake	+6:05	+6:40
Morgans Point	+10:21	+5:19
Round Point, Trinity Bay	+10:39	+5:15
Point Barrow, Trinity Bay	+5:48	+4:43
Gilchrist, East Bay	+3:16	+4:18
Jamaica Beach, Trinity Bay	+2:38	+3:31
Christmas Point	+2:39	+2:38
Galveston Pleasure Pier	+2:32	+2:33
San Luis Pass	-0:09	+2:31
Freeport Harbor	-0:44	-0:09

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