Big Bend Angler

The Quarterly Journal of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club

Volume 50, Number 4 Fall, 2017

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Volume 50, Number 4 Fall, 2017

Big Bend Angler

The Quarterly Journal of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club Founded 1968

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GOFC Meetings

When:

4th Tuesday of each month.
Fellowship begins at 7:00 PM,
program begins at 7:30 PM

Where:

U.F. College of Veterinary Medicine's New Lecture Hall

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Events Calendar

Monthly Meetings

Monthly club meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month (note that this is ***not*** the last Tuesday in those months having 5 Tuesdays). Fellowship begins at 7:00 p.m., with the meeting program beginning at 7:30. No monthly meetings are held in February, June, August, November or December, being replaced, respectively, by the **Seafood and Awards Banquet**, **Fish Fry**, **Annual Social**, the **Cookout & Auction,** and your own Christmas holiday activities. **Coming Events**

At the **October 24th Monthly Meeting** P&J Marine educate us on ways help maintain our boats. Door prizes and raffle prizes abound, be sure to attend this one!

Three events are scheduled for November. First up is the **Fall Tournament in Cedar Key on November 4th**. All participants must register in advance of the tournament by 9pm on Friday, November 3rd.

On November 11th John Patrick will host a Shallow Water Grouper Learnament. John will lead this the late Fall learnament where we typically target large gag grouper, who come into nearshore waters of Crystal RIver in search of food. This is a great learnament where individuals get to explore the giant rock pillars that populate this area.

The annual **Ellett Auction and Cook Out will be held November 17th** at the home of Ed and Marcia Ellett. The main purpose of this event (other than a fun evening socializing with other club members and enjoying good food) is to raise money for the club by auctioning off items donated by members. So be sure to bring any tackle and outdoor gear or other items you no longer need or use that can be donated for the auction.

Cover

Lightning does strike twice . . . Marcia Ellett shows off the cobia that won her a boat in the 2017 CCA Star tournament. Hubby, Ed, won a boat in that same contest last year, also with a cobia.

Final Rule for Hogfish Management in Gulf Federal Waters

NOAA FIsheries News Release

Hogfish in the Gulf of Mexico will be managed as a single population from the Texas/Mexico border to a line near Cape Sable, Florida. A recent population assessment determined that the Gulf hogfish population is not undergoing overfishing (i.e., the rate of removal is not too high) and is not overfished (the population abundance is not too low). This rule adjusts annual catch limits, establishes gear restrictions, and increases the minimum size limit for Gulf of Mexico hogfish to prevent overfishing.

The new rule took effect August 24th, 2017. It sets annual catch limits at 219,000 pounds for 2017 and 2018 and 159,300 pounds for 2019 and subsequent years, increases the hogfish minimum size limit from 12 to 14 inches fork length, and prohibits the use of powerheads (a type of spearfishing device) for harvest of hogfish in the Gulf stressed area; an area previously defined by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council.

Governor Scott Awards Three FWC Officers with Medals of Heroism

FWC News Release

Governor Rick Scott has recognized three Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission officers for their bravery and service during Hurricane Irma. The following FWC first responders were recognized with the Medal of Heroism Award:

- Officer Jefferson Carroll
- Officer Brittany Mobley
- Officer Clint Williams

"Hurricane Irma was a massive storm that impacted families, communities and businesses across our state," said Governor Scott. "I am proud of our many first responders, law enforcement officers and Florida National Guard members who bravely answered the call to help those in need. These individuals are some of the many heroes who put their lives on the line and stand ready to keep our families safe and protected every day. I am honored to recognize them today."

Federal Release Device Requirement Proposed

NOAA Fsheries Press Release

In April 2017, the Gulf Council passed a motion instructing staff to develop an action to require either descending devices or venting tools on board vessels possessing reef fish to reduce discard mortality.

Venting tools and descending devices, when used properly, have been shown to increase survival of released fish in some, but not all, circumstances. Depth of capture, handling time, and the presence of predators are among the factors affecting survival of released fish.

A venting tool is a device capable of penetrating the abdomen of a fish in order to deflate the expanded air due to a ruptured air bladder from the body cavity of a fish retrieved from depth, with minimum damage. A venting tool must be a sharpened, hollow instrument, such as a hypodermic syringe with the plunger removed, or a 16–gauge needle fixed to a handle. A larger gauge needle is preferred in order to allow more air to escape rapidly. A device that is not hollow, such as a knife or ice pick, is not a venting tool, although it may be possible to use such a device to vent a fish in the absence of a venting tool.

A descending device is an instrument that can return a fish to depth with minimum injury to the fish. The fish need not be returned to the bottom, but to a depth sufficient for the fish to be able to recover from the effects of barotrauma, generally 33 feet (1 atmosphere of pressure) or greater. The device can be a weighted hook, lip clamp, or box that will hold the fish while it is lowered to depth, and will either release the fish automatically, or release the fish by actions of the operator of the device, or will allow the fish to escape on its own. Since minimizing surface time is critical to increasing survival, descending devices should be rigged and ready for use while fishing is occurring.

Studies ahve shown that surface released fish (non-vented and not descended) were three times as likely to die compared to descended fish and 1.9 times as likely to die compared to vented fish.

At this time no decision has been taken, but the proposed alternatives are:

1. No requirement.
2. Recommend, but not require, the possession of venting or descendineg devices on board.
3. Require the possession of venting tools and/or descending devices on board. Their actual use may or may not be left to the discretion of the angler.
4. Develop an outreach program to educate fishermen on the availability and correct use of venting tools and descending devices.

Fishing Reports & Forecasts

All GOFC Members Are Invited to Submit Reports of Their Latest Fishing Trips

Our fishing report section include reports for the previous 3 months of fishing activity. In addition to our regular contributors, all GOFC members are urged to send us their reports for inclusion in the member reports section of the next quarter's issue of Big Bend Angler. By tracking these reports over the year, readers should gain a stronger understanding of how things change with the seasons and what to do about it, so that you too can catch your share of the big ones.

Post Hurricane Party

By Dale Reed

After Irma came through we decided to go check out some fishing spots out a little deeper to see how the fish were affected. Launching out of MacRaes in Homosassa, we trolled some Stretch 30s to see if there was anybody home. We were able to pick up one keeper and one short gag grouper.

After going out to about 50 feet or so with no luck, we decided to come back in a little closer to where we had the first bites and bottom fish the area. The weather was nice and water temperatures were in the low 80s. All the rain and freshwater certainly dropped the temperatures down a bit and made the water extremely murky.

We caught a variety of fish including grunts, snappers and groupers. Using frozen threadfin herring, cigar minnows and cut baits on the bottom, it started to wake them up. After about 10 minutes we dropped down a few hearty live baits.

The bite was on! A constant bite of mostly groupers were pulling hard on our lines. After a couple of break offs, we ramped up to a heavier leader and an #8 circle hook. That seemed to help us get the fish up off the rocky bottom. I think the murky water helped our situation that day, allowing us to use a bigger hook and heavier leader.

We went to several other spots, all with about the same success. It seemed we were pulling one or two keepers off of each rock pile. Lots of grouper were in the 20-23 1/2 inch range. Red grouper need to be at least 20 inches and gags need to be 24 or more inches. We were able to find 4 red grouper all 17 to 19 inches. Nice to see though, as we have not seen very many red grouper in our area lately. We pulled up our lines and headed back in after a wonderful day of great fishing action with some great friends.

An amazing post hurricane trip.

Crystal River Reds

By Jerry Rose

I was eager to get back on the water after a period of several weeks what with bad weekend weather and family plans keeping me onshore. I invited a neighbor/friend, David, to join me. The plan was to target some big redfish out of Crystal River.

We found the fish early. The first fish was right at 26 inches (a nice 5.48 pound fish to enter in the Ellet contest), the second fish was 22 inches, then a few break offs from giants on light tackle, and finally a nice 29 inch over slot red fish.

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Lightning Strikes Twice

By Ed Ellett

(Editor's Note: On the cover of this issue of Big Bend Angler, Marcia Ellett shows off the cobia that won her a boat in the 2017 CCA Star tournament. Last year Ed Ellett won a boat in that same contest, also with a cobia. What follows is Ed's take on this year's Ellett family tournament success.)

Amazing, yet true! I won last year and Marcia won this year. She'll be receiving 19' Bossman Karma, Micro Skiff, powered by 25 hp Yamaha outboard in late October.

Marcia's winning entry came the day before tournament ended, September 3rd. We made a point to fish the tournament last weekend. We fished Cedar Key islands from the 33rd Strike Group, Metal, catamaran I won in last year's STAR tournament.

Marcia Ellett's new ride, a 19 foot Bossman Karma, Micro Skiff.

By early afternoon I had a trout entry, but fishing was slow. We were fishing channel edge when noticed a boat hovering around outside marker. After 15 minutes or so they left and came our way, soon to approach us. It was the current, Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club, John Ellett Best Angler of Year Award, top contender/member, Tim Pederson, fishing with Travis Creamer. They mentioned that they had spotted a legal cobia, but they could not get it to bite as they only had artificial baits. I thanked them for the tip and mentioned that Marcia and I would give it a try as we had ample live baits.

We approached the channel marker but saw nothing after a couple passes because the water was so turbid. I went to anchor boat to give a better try and bottom fish since a cobia had been seen by a reliable source.

While I was putting down the anchor, Marcia put line a out and immediately shouted "fish on." I unclipped the anchor (I had a bobber on the end of the line for quick release), and, the fish, fortunately, ran away from the marker.

We drifted clear of marker, and Marcia did an excellent job of fighting the fish – not too hard, not too easy, line tight! I gaffed the fish when I had the opportunity, and high fives were exchanged. She had a nice tournament entry, and was pumped!

We had no plans to fish last day of tournament, but on the way home Marcia suggested we go again. I had to acquiesce. That said, the next day we caught no fish that we could enter.

Tuesday evening Marcia and I were home watching recorded news when the phone's caller ID scrolled across TV – "Leiza Fitzgerald" (Tournament Director) calling!! Marcia, excitedly answered.

Side note — I ended the tournament with five speckled trout, two cobia, and, a bucket of trash entries. Marcia ended tournament with one Trout, one Ladies Division – non tagged Redfish, and, two buckets of trash. We thought one of us may have won Costa glasses, a Power Pole, a fishing rod, or some other "minor" prize.

Marcia was delighted to learn from Leiza that the random draw had favored **HER** this time, and she won **FIRST** place, Open Cobia Division. Her one entry from the second to last day of the tournament had payed off big time, just as my one entry did the previous year.

Marcia and I look forward to inviting Kim and Travis to dinner next week. I think it will be in order as a "thank you" for the tip, don't you!?

Offshore Report

By Jay Peacock

As I write this on October 20th our first weak cold front has just passed through our waters, which should cool water temperatures in the Gulf a bit and help out with our fishing. We experienced warmer than normal temperatures earlier this month, with water temps in the Gulf in the mid 80's, which is unusually warm for October.

If you can find clear water on the usual nearshore reefs, large spanish mackerel should be abundant and easily caught with a variety of artificials, including white or yellow Floreo jigs, Gotcha plugs, small spoons, or small diving plugs like Yozuri Crystal Minnows. I like to either drift and cast or troll with these lures. A fast jerky retrieve seems to work best. Nine Mile Bank out of Steinhatchee, Suwannee's Spotty Bottom as well as Seahorse Reef and the Kingfish Hole out of Cedar Key are productive and popular Spanish Mackerel spots.

Live bait (pinfish, pigfish, sand perch, etc.) should be plentiful on shallower hard bottom areas as well as on the grass flats. Live bait is an excellent way to catch either grouper or kingfish. Besides the traditional anchoring and stationary bottom fishing routine for grouper, drifting a rocky/hard bottom area can be extremely effective. I prefer a knocker rig for drifting with just

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FWC's Gone Coastal

Help Reef Fish Survive After Barotrauma

By Melissa Crouch

If you've ever gone saltwater fishing in Florida, you are well aware of the variety of species that call these waters home. A popular target for Florida's saltwater anglers are reef fish such as snappers and groupers. These species are fun to catch and provide a great bottom-fishing experience for both novice and veteran anglers.

There's nothing like dropping my bait to the bottom and moments later having the bite of a lifetime. As I reel in my catch, the excitement of what this mystery fish could be begins to build.

But what if my mystery fish is out-of-season and must be released? There are steps I can take to ensure that I have a great day of fishing while conserving our fisheries.

If my catch has signs of barotrauma, I will need to take some specific steps before returning it to the water. Bulging eyes, a bloated belly, distended intestines and stomach protruding from the mouth are all signs of barotrauma, which occurs when fish with a swim bladder are pulled up from deep water (typically depths greater than 50 feet). The change in pressure can make gases in the swim bladder expand and, in some cases, cause it to burst. When a fish suffering from barotrauma is released, it is unable to swim back down to capture depth, making it difficult for the fish to survive the elements and avoid predators.

The stomach protruding from the mouth is one sign of barotrauma (the swim bladder does not protrude from the mouth.

Helping a fish with barotrauma

Fortunately, descending devices may increase a fish's chance of survival. Descending devices bring fish back down to a depth where increased pressure from the water will recompress swim bladder gases and allow the fish to swim away.

Descending devices fall into one of three categories: mouth clamps, inverted hooks and fish elevators. Mouth clamps attach to a rod and reel or handline, clamp to the mouth of the fish and use a pressure sensor (releases fish automatically at a predetermined depth selected by the angler) or a weighted spring release mechanism (lets go of fish after an angler gives a sharp tug on the line). View RokLees and Seaqualizer mouth clamp videos on the FWC Saltwater Fishing YouTube channel.

Inverted hooks work similarly to mouth clamp devices, but are inserted through the hole made by the hook (view Fish Saver and Shelton inverted hook videos on the FWC Saltwater Fishing YouTube channel). Once the fish is deep enough to reverse the effects of barotrauma, the angler reels in the line and the fish swims away.

A third option is the fish elevator – an inverted container, such as a milk crate, with a rope attached to the top and weights on the bottom. This creates a bottomless cage that brings fish back down to capture depth (view milk crate fish elevator video on the FWC Saltwater Fishing YouTube channel).

Anglers should choose the device and method they are most comfortable with, that best fits the situation at hand and that minimizes the amount of time the fish is out of the water. Descending devices should only be used when fish show one or more signs of barotrauma and cannot swim back down on their own.

It is essential to work quickly when using these tools and return the fish to the water as soon as possible. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is currently conducting a citizen-science study to learn more about what prevents anglers from using descending devices.

A variety of descending devices may be used to help return fish suffering from barotrauma back down to capture depths.

Luckily, I prepared before my reef fishing trip and have a mouth clamp descending device already attached to a designated rod and reel to release my catch quickly. Depending on the fish's size, 1-3 pounds of weight needs to be attached to the device to descend the fish.

I attach the clamp to the fish's bottom jaw and gently set the device and the fish into the water, releasing line as the fish returns toward the bottom. Once I'm between 40-70 feet down, or about two-thirds of the capture depth, I give a sharp tug on the line and the fish is released. I reel in my device and weights and ready my designated rod and reel for the next catch that may need to be released.

"Many of the most highly publicized events of my presidency are not nearly as memorable or significant in my life as fishing with my daddy."

— Jimmy Carter

Reports
Continued from page 4

In the mix we also landed a few trout, some big mangrove snapper, and some grunts.

With our reds in the box early and the day still young, we opted to leave them biting in search of some snook or trout. That plan did not exactly play out well. We only managed a little 14 inch snook-lite.

A nice redfish!

Some oyster bars that will often give up good trout did not produce more than a big school of ladyfish for us.

The water temperature was about 85 degrees, and shrimp on a jig took most of the fish this day. The bite seemed to be the best early, as things got slow toward the noon hour.

Now to get out and work on knocking out some of the offshore species!

A Family Day at Cedar Key

By Nick Reed

After months of planning a fishing trip for family visiting from California, as fate would have it the weather was tumultuous. We waited a few days, then took a chance on a break between storms. Radar indicated scattered rain showers with a chance of clearing in the afternoon. The forecast was for one-foot seas and up to 10 knot winds.

We loaded up the boat and our pick-up and minivan with the 4 men and 5 women crew and headed for Cedar Key. While in route, we received a free truck and boat wash from the rain gods. Our confidence in our plans began to waver when we saw lines of fishing boats heading back East from Cedar Key, having apparently abandoned their hopes for fishing that day.

Approximately 10 miles from Cedar Key, a co-worker called me and asked, "Was that you and your boat headed to Cedar Key?" I said, "Yes. We're headed out there to give it a shot. Weather forecast looks like it will clear in the afternoon." He replied, "The rain and lightning chased everyone out of there, so we decided to call it a day." He wished us good luck.

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Stone Crab Season Opened October 15

FWC News Release

Florida's recreational and commercial stone crab claw harvest season opened October 15th in state and federal waters. To ensure this valuable resource is available for generations to come, take care when removing crab claws, and follow all protective management guidelines for stone crab harvest.

To be harvested, stone crab claws must be at least 2.75 inches in length when measured from the elbow to the tip of the lower immovable portion of the claw (see illustration). View a video on how to properly remove the claw, and increase the likelihood of survival of the released crab on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's YouTube channel.

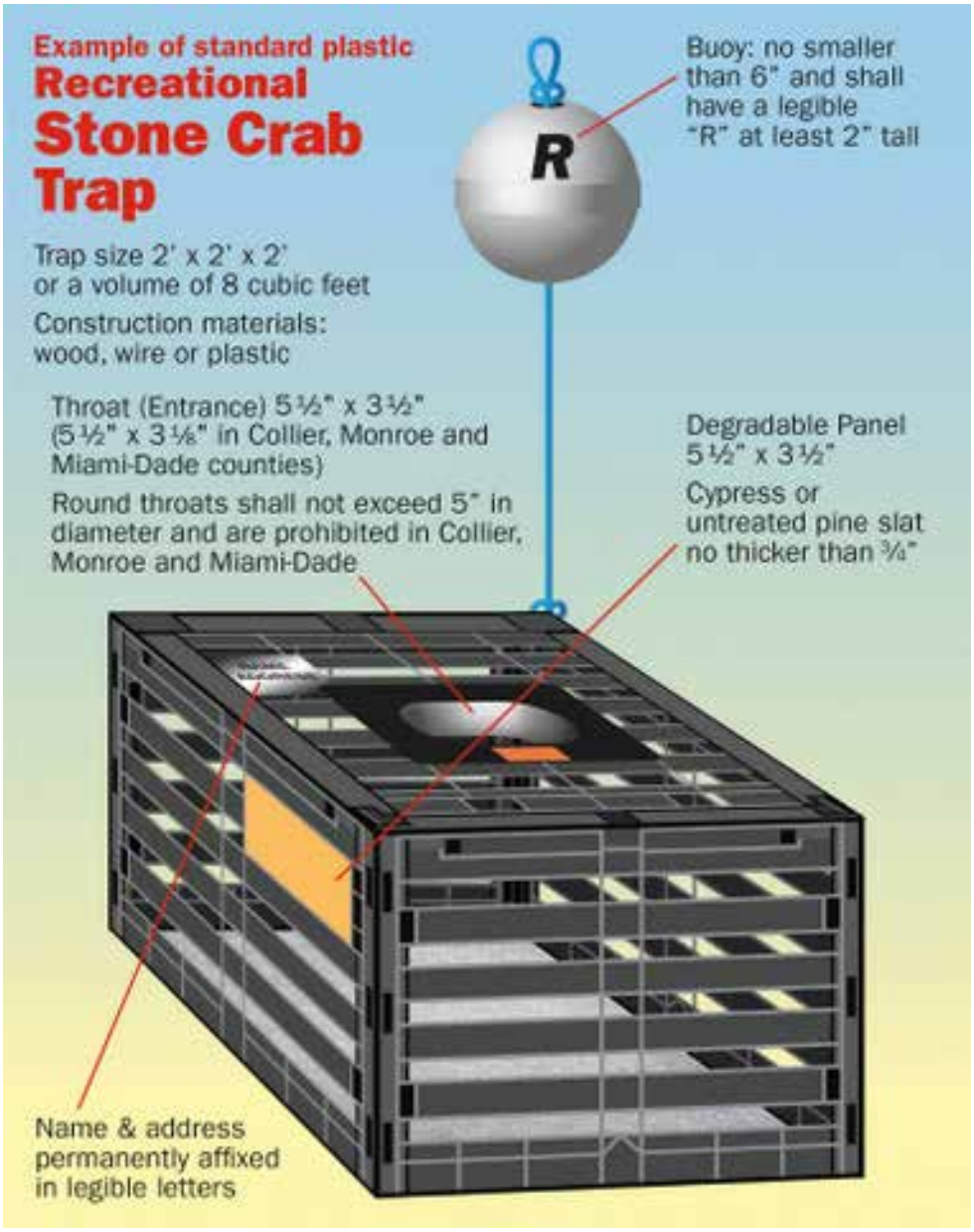
Claws may not be taken from egg-bearing stone crabs. Egg-bearing females are identi able by the orange or brown egg mass, also known as a "sponge," which is visible on the underside of the crab when it is picked up or turned over.

Recreational harvesters can use up to ve stone crab traps per person. Stone crabs may not be harvested with any device that can puncture, crush or injure a crab's body. Examples of devices that can cause this kind of damage include spears and hooks.

Recreational and commercial traps may be baited and placed in the water 10 days prior to the opening of the season but may not be pulled from the water for harvest purposes until October 15. Traps that are not being fished should be removed from the water to avoid ghost fishing, a process in which marine species get caught in the trap for extended periods of time and are not harvested.

Round entrances (also known as throats or funnels) are not allowed for stone crab traps used in state or federal waters off Collier, Monroe and Miami-Dade counties. The rectangular or rounded rectangular entrances typically used in stone crab traps in these waters must be no larger than 5.5 by 3.125 inches at the narrowest portion of the opening. Stone crab traps being used in other areas of the state may have an entrance that is 5.5 by 3.5 inches.

Harvesters are encouraged to take only one claw, even if both claws are of legal size, so that the released crab will be better able to defend itself from predators. A crab that is returned to the water with one claw intact will be able to obtain more food in a shorter amount of time and therefore regrow its claw faster. There is a recreational daily bag limit of 1 gallon of claws per person or 2 gallons per vessel, whichever is less.



The season will be open through May 15, 2018, closing May 16. Stone crab regulations are the same in state and federal waters.

"The fishing was so good I thought it was yesterday."

— Major Hyperbolee

FWC Workshop Videos Available on YouTube

By Charlie Courtney

This year the FWC held three series of in-person workshops at various dates and locations around the state. The first sought input on spotted seatrout (12 different cities and dates), the second sought input on the staggered scallop season (5 cities and dates), and the third sought input on goliath grouper management (16 cities and dates).

Although participation by the general public was good, many people were unable to attend one of the scheduled workshops for various reasons. To gain more user input, FWC has now made available Virtual Workshops in the form of pdfs of the workshop presentations, including some question and answer sessions, plus videos of the presentation for the spotted seatrout and goliath grouper workshops. Those who are interested may view the videos and other material by clicking on the links below:

Spotted Seatrout:

View a Video of the Workshop
View a pdf of the presentation
Submit comments on spotted seatrout

Goliath Grouper:

View a Video of the Workshop
View a pdf of the presentation
Take the feedback survey

Bay Scallops

No Video of the Workshop is available
View a pdf of the presentation
Submit comments on Bay Scallops

We applaud the FWC for being so proactive and going the extra mile to solicit input from the general public on these issues.

Proposed Florida Management for Recreational Red Snapper

Gulf Council News Release

Fishermen from different areas of the Gulf have requested more flexibility in recreational red snapper management so that regulations provide greater socio-economic benefits to their particular area. Referred to as state management, the devolution of some federal management authority to Florida is being explored as a way to provide greater flexibility in the management of recreational red snapper. A state management program would enable Florida to establish the recreational regulations (specifically bag limits and season dates) for its anglers, in contrast to uniform recreational regulations applied to all anglers fishing in federal waters in the Gulf.

This Florida Management for Recreational Red Snapper Amendment contains actions to define a state management program for the recreational harvest of red snapper in Florida's state waters and adjacent federal waters. The first action proposes two approaches for implementing state management: the delegation of limited authority to Florida to specify management measures or the use of a conservation equivalency plan (CEP), in which Florida would specify the management measures to be used to constrain harvest to Florida's portion of the recreational sector Annual Catch Limit (ACL, the amount of fish that can be harvested from the stock each year as established in the State Management Amendment).

Under either approach, Florida would select the management measures most appropriate for management of its portion of the stock based on the fishing preferences of Florida anglers. For example, Florida specific regulations could accommodate the local differences in tourist seasons or weather conditions from other parts of the Gulf, thereby optimizing fishing opportunities.

The second action addresses post-season accountability measures to determine the action to take in the event the Florida harvest of red snapper exceeds Florida's portion of the recreational sector Allowable Catch Limit. Florida would establish the specific regulations pertaining to the bag limit and season structure, using the process for the selected approach (delegation or CEP).

Although a state management program would allow for the establishment of certain management measures most suited to the state, state management may not result in additional fishing days, particularly if Florida establishes its season when fishing effort is greatest. However, providing Florida with the flexibility to establish some management measures is expected to result in social and economic benefits by providing optimal fishing opportunities from the state's portion of the recreational ACL. Nevertheless, proposed state management measures must achieve the same conservation goals as the current federal management measures (i.e., constrain landings of participating fishermen to Florida's allocated portion of the recreational sector ACL).

Under state management, red snapper would remain a federally managed species. The Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) would continue to oversee management of the stock. This includes continuing to comply with the mandate to ensure the red snapper recreational ACL is not exceeded and that conservation objectives are achieved. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee would continue to determine the acceptable biological catch for red snapper, while the Council and NMFS would determine the total recreational sector ACL, a portion of which would be allocated to Florida.

All federal regulations for the harvest of red snapper would remain effective. The existing bag limit and season start date would be designated the default federal regulations, and would be applicable for all states that do not have an approved state management program.

Upon Florida's state management program approval and implementation, an exemption from the default federal regulations would be made for Florida's bag limit and fishing season for red snapper landed in the state from both federal and state waters. NMFS would retain authority for the remaining management regulations including implementing ACL adjustments,

Snapper on Page 11

Offshore
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enough weight to get the bait near the bottom. Nothing sets off a grouper more than a tasty grunting pigfish slowly drifting over a reef.

Looking forward, November is my favorite month for shallow water grouper fishing. Grouper can be readily caught off rocks and hard bottom areas in the 25 to 35 foot range once the water cools off in November. A well known and productive area for shallow water grouper out of Cedar Key is the Kingfish Hole (N29 02.770 W83 10.800), which is a large area of scattered rocks and hard bottom. Trolling, drifting or anchoring is productive here.

Keep in mind when trolling for grouper in shallower water that they can easily make it back down to the bottom structure after a hookup and "rock up". To help prevent this from happening you will need to have your drag setting much tighter than in deeper water. Also remember to run diving plugs closer to the boat when trolling in shallow water to keep them from catching on the bottom structure.

This is a great time of year to go offshore fishing so pick a nice calm day and get out there!

Gator Domino's is a Proud Sponsor of Doug Johnson's Reeling For Kids Celebrity Fishing Tournament.

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Doug Johnson's Reeling for Kid's Fishing Tournament August,22 2004

Classified Ads

(As a new service, GOFC Members may submit fishing and boating related classified ads free of charge for inclusion in the newsletter and magazine.)

Jon Boat for Sale: 2008 Lowe Model 1652 Roughneck (heavier gauge aluminum) with 2007 50 hp Mercury 2-stroke engine and single axle trailer. Includes anchor and dock lines and all required safety gear — life jackets, cushion, flares, anchor, dock lines, paddle, etc. Rigged to accept a Minn-Kota trolling motor. $5,000. Contact Charlie Courtney at 352-222-3708 or courtneych@mac.com.

Reports
Continued from page 7

Undaunted, we arrived in Cedar Key around noon. The parking spaces were plentiful thanks to the exodus. The men decided to push forth and launch the boat, while the ladies opted to play it safe and remain on land to browse the town of Cedar Key. One additional young man was to meet us and join the fishing expedition, but he was running late.

Since all passengers were beginner fishermen, we performed a quick safety review of life vests, EPIRB, and VHF radio, then headed out to Snake Key to catch some bait. One lucky toss of the 10-foot cast net, gave us enough bait for the day. We returned to Cedar Key to pick up our final passenger and were off.

After arriving at one of my favorite spots at high tide, we put the Talon down and rigged up six trout rods with poppers and jigs. After about 15 minutes, we began catching trout and redfish but no keepers, so we pulled up the Talon and moved to the next spot. There we caught two keeper trout and more small redfish, then broke for lunch.

We wet the lines again after the lunch break. This time two of our beginners were using cut bait. It didn't take long before we had a double hook-up with two reels screaming. One line broke, but the fight was on with the other — a mystery fish that fought for over half an hour. As it was finally brought alongside the boat, we saw that it was a giant stingray. so we released him. For the young man that caught the stingray, it was quite an exciting battle.

While all that was going on, I hooked a huge *Sciaenops ocellatus,* a.k.a. redfish, that put up a struggle, going around and under the boat, threatening to tangle up the lines.

In the end, it turned out to be a great fishing day despite the narrow four-hour window we had to fish in. Each of the men caught plenty of fish, and they had the opportunity to see dolphin and tarpon. There were lots of stories to share with the ladies when we returned to meet them in Cedar Key!

"Calling Fishing a hobby is like calling Brain Surgery a job."

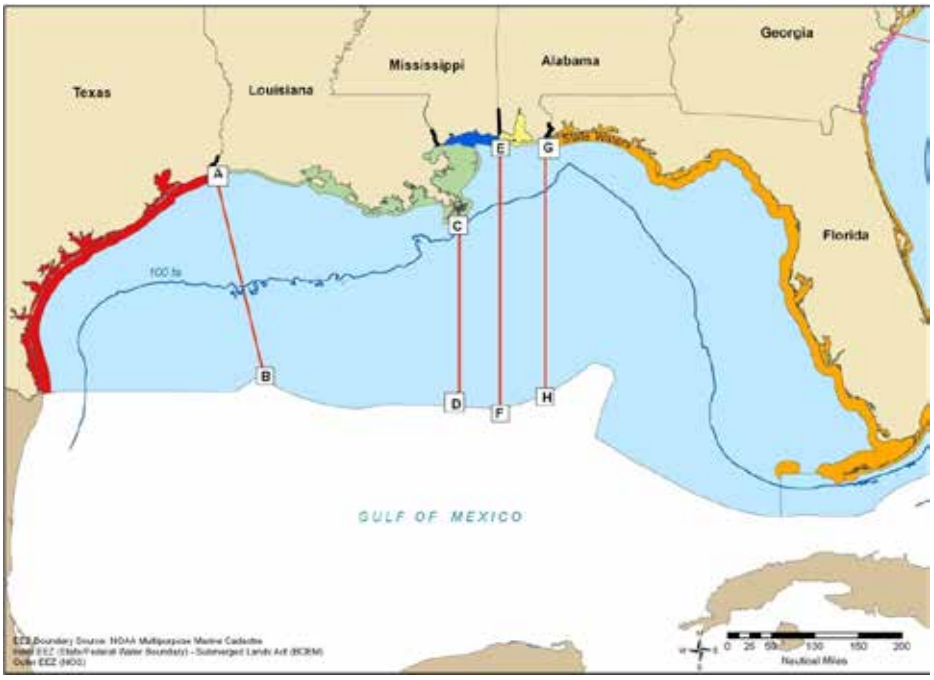
— Paul Schullery

Snapper
Continued from page 9

regulating federal permits, and managing the commercial red snapper individual fishing quota program.

When the recreational sector ACL for the Gulf of Mexico as a whole is reached, further harvest of red snapper is prohibited for the duration of the year. This means that even if a state under a state management program has remaining quota, the state must close its fishing season and prohibit further harvest of red snapper once the recreational sector ACL for the Gulf is determined to have been met.

The boundaries shown on the right represents the boundaries between states for the purpose of any state having an active state management program.



Map of state waters (shaded in color for each State) with established and proposed boundaries between states extending into federal waters. Federal waters adjacent to a state refer to the portion of federal waters bounded by the state's waters and the boundary line(s) shown in the figure that separate federal waters off of each state.

Men's Ellett Point Standings

20 October 2017

GOFC member	Amberjack	pts	Bluefish	pts	Cobia	pts	Flounder	pts	Grouper	pts	King Mackerel	pts	Redfish	pts	Sheeps-head	pts	Spanish Mackerel	pts	Trout	pts	Bonus points	Total points
Cooper, Virgil	19.1	14.04	2.02	17.41	31.54	15.05	2.27	20.64	14.35	24.96	27.96	24.10	8.06	24.48	6.45	19.79	2.79	12.39	5.42	21.51	9	203.37
Pedersen, Tim	17.83	13.11	2.2	18.97	52.40	25.00	1.23	11.18	10.27	17.86	10.75	9.27	7.66	23.27	5.70	17.48	5.63	25.00	4.10	16.27	12	189.41
Morales, Carlos	30.5	22.43	1.62	13.97	29.03	13.85	2.00	18.18	10.63	18.48	18.50	15.95	7.23	21.96	7.25	22.24	2.44	10.83	6.30	25.00	6	188.89
Reed, Dale	21.99	16.17	1.93	16.64	19.75	9.42	2.68	24.36	10.63	18.49	29.00	25.00	6.37	19.35	5.93	18.19	1.49	6.62	1.69	6.70	9	169.93
Byatt, John	34	25.00	1.625	14.01		0.00	2.75	25.00	6.25	10.87	6.31	5.44	4.45	13.52	5.00	15.34	3.92	17.41	4.13	16.37	3	145.95
Creamer, Travis	0.01	0.01	2.5	21.55	40.00	19.08		0.00	9.47	16.46	7.42	6.40	2.80	8.51	4.66	14.29	4.20	18.65	3.40	13.49	12	130.44
Horn, Phil	19.38	14.25	1.625	14.01		0.00		0.00		0.00	25.80	22.24	7.78	23.63	4.82	14.79	2.10	9.33	5.17	20.50	3	121.74
McElroy, Ross		0.00	1.21	10.43		0.00	2.00	18.18		0.00	7.29	6.28	6.00	18.23	6.85	21.01	4.20	18.65	3.82	15.16	6	113.94
Ellett, Ed	0.01	0.01	1.05	9.05	25.13	11.99	0.81	7.36	12.00	20.87	7.67	6.61	4.81	14.62	2.77	8.50	3.94	17.50	2.75	10.91	6	113.42
Magnifico, Justin		0.00	2.59	22.33	19.20	9.16	2.50	22.73		0.00		0.00	4.20	12.76	5.31	16.29	2.90	12.88	2.47	9.80	6	111.94
Wilson, Hal		0.00		0.00	15.50	7.40	1.70	15.45	7.00	12.17	18.90	16.29	3.70	11.24	6.96	21.35	2.29	10.17	2.99	11.87	6	111.94
Rose, Jerry		0.00	2.9	25.00		0.00	1.41	12.82		0.00		0.00	5.48	16.65	4.05	12.42	1.35	5.99	1.96	7.78	6	86.66
Hilton, Chic	33.52	24.65		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	7.25	6.25		0.00	5.99	18.37	2.18	9.68	2.63	10.42	6	75.37
Patterson, David		0.00	2.36	20.34		0.00	1.26	11.45		0.00	14.50	12.50		0.00		0.00	2.67	11.86	2.18	8.65	3	67.81
Shands, Joe		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	6.50	19.74	8.15	25.00		0.00		0.00	0	44.74
Mcdavid, Elliott		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	20.10	17.33	8.23	25.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	0	42.33
Wagner, Phil		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	14.38	25.00	12.56	10.83		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	3	38.83
Studstill, Coldby		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	4.16	12.76	2.35	10.44	3.07	12.18	3	38.38
Maynard, Glenn		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	5.90	18.10	1.94	8.61		0.00	6	32.71
Haberman, Mark		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	6.19	18.99		0.00		0.00	3	21.99
Roy, Russ		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	6.00	18.40		0.00		0.00	3	21.40
Cutright, Jack		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.42	7.42		0.00		0.00	3	10.42
Reed, Nick		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	6	6.00
Acomb, Glenn		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	3	3.00

Elite Angler Ellett Point Standings

20 October 2017

GOFC member	Amberjack	pts	Bluefish	pts	Cobia	pts	Flounder	pts	Grouper	pts	King Mackerel	pts	Redfish	pts	Sheeps-head	pts	Spanish Mackerel	pts	Trout	pts	Bonus points	Total points
Patrick, John	17.58	15.16		0.00	16.00	16.02	1.28	25.00		0.00	6.38	5.70	6.63	25.00	4.96	23.75	4.25	25.00	4.05	25.00	6	166.63
Knopf, Debby	28.81	24.84		0.00	18.98	19.00		0.00	8.02	25.00		0.00		0.00	5.22	25.00	3.84	22.59		0.00	6	122.43
Knopf, Ken	29	25.00		0.00	24.97	25.00		0.00	6.92	21.57	27.94	25.00	3.18	11.98	3.83	18.34	3.23	19.00		0.00	6	151.90

Understanding The John Ellett Contest

By Brian Kiel

The John Ellett contest is a club contest that runs one year long and pits club members against each other in a friendly fishing contest encompassing three categories: male, female, and youth (under 16). A simplified formula awards points on a relative basis based on the heaviest fish of each species.

Each species category has a maximum of 25 points and points are totaled to give an overall Ellett standing. For example, if the heaviest trout entered was a 6 lb trout, this trout would receive the maximum 25 points, while a trout weighing half of that weight (3 lb) would receive half of the 25 points (12.5 pts). A 1.5 lb trout would receive 6.25 pts. Current Ellett standings are printed regularly in the Club's newsletter, magazine, and on the GOFC website.

It's easy to participate in the contest. All that's required is that you submit a weigh slip of any or all of the ten species the club fishes for: spotted seatrout, redfish, flounder, sheepshead, cobia, kingfish, Spanish mackerel, greater amberjack, bluefish, and grouper. Weigh slips are available at every GOFC meeting, or can be submitted online using the GOFC electronic entry form.

Any scale can be used to estimate the fish weight, however, when a fish exceeds the maximum weight for a particular species (see below on weigh slip under Special Catches), that fish must be weighed on a State certified scale like those found in commercial establishments that use a scale to determine the value of an item sold to the public. Grocery stores like Publix, Winn Dixie, etc. or a fish house like Northwest Seafood in Gainesville will usually weigh fish, if asked nicely. The weight should be noted on a receipt or store weigh slip, signed by the individual weighing the fish, and attached to the GOFC weigh slip to be turned into the club. The club Weighmaster keeps a certified club scale at home for members to use (contact the GOFC Weighmaster/Record Keeper).

Ellett on Page 13

Women's Ellett Point Standings

20 October 2017

GOFC member	Amberjack	pts	Bluefish	pts	Cobia	pts	Flounder	pts	Grouper	pts	King Mackerel	pts	Redfish	pts	Sheeps-head	pts	Spanish Mackerel	pts	Trout	pts	Bonus points	Total points
Morales, Nia	32	25.00		0.00		0.00	0.94	25.00		0.00		0.00	7.29	25.00	5.10	25.00	1.75	25.00	3.64	25.00	0	150.00
Ellett, Marcia		0.00		0.00	16.63	25.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	3.02	14.80	1.74	24.86		0.00	3	67.66
Mertz, Michaela		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	4.21	20.64		0.00		0.00	3	23.64
Cutright, Melvina		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.86	14.02		0.00		0.00	3	17.02
Rose, Brandi		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	3.04	10.43		0.00		0.00		0.00	0	10.43

Youth Ellett Point Standings

20 October 2017

GOFC member	Amberjack	pts	Bluefish	pts	Cobia	pts	Flounder	pts	Grouper	pts	King Mackerel	pts	Redfish	pts	Sheeps-head	pts	Spanish Mackerel	pts	Trout	pts	Bonus points	Total points
Wagner, Reid		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	10.84	10.79		0.00		0.00	3.83	25.00		0.00	0	35.79
Wagner, Ryan		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	25.13	25.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	0	25.00

Ellett

Continued from page 12

To win the contest you don't have to catch the largest fish, just catch as many of the 10 species as you can (hopefully a couple will be heavy fish). Participation in club events also helps as points are awarded for participation in club Tournaments (3 pts) and Funaments (1 pts). Awards are given to three places with the top male & female angler receiving a coveted inscribed pewter plate from the Ellett family, who happen to have sponsored this contest since its inception. The Ellett contest dates run from January 1st to December 31st with awards given out during the March Awards Banquet.

In addition to the Ellett awards, the club also gives awards and recognition for the heaviest three fish of each species. The club also maintains a list of GOFC Record Catches that include 109 species, so keep any species that is either not noted or exceeds the record. You can also submit a weigh slip for one of the "Other Two" species (dolphin and tripletail) to be computed for a separate award following the same guidelines for Special Catches.

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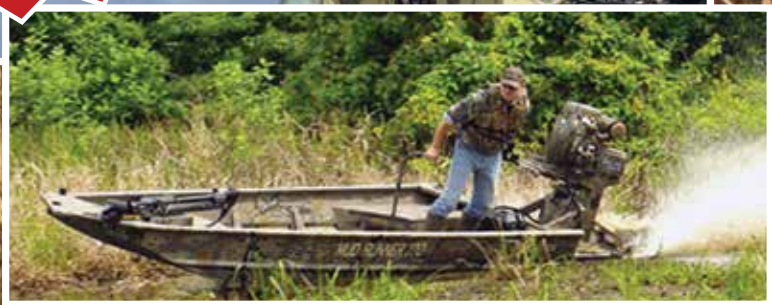

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