The Acute Angler

October, 2021
Volume 54, Number 10

The monthly newsletter of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club

October Hot Shot

Fresh from Florida!

Mark Rustemier demonstrating a recipe for fresh shrimp that he learned from a pelican on a recent trip to Palatka with Ed Ellet. The annual St. Johns shrimp run is a great way to stay sharp with a cast net while stocking up on the delicious crustaceans.

Submit your photos on http://www.gofc.us/wp/ph

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President's Corner

By Mark Haberman,
GOFC President

Fall has finally arrived, and so far, this fall has been extra special. Not because the grouper and mackerel are chewing hard... Not because the temperatures and humidity have dropped... This fall has been extra special because we have finally been permitted back into the UF Vet Medicine auditorium to hold our monthly meetings. We had our 1st in-person meeting in nearly 18 months on September 28th and we started out with a very special guest, Captain Rick Ryals. Rick is all over You Tube and well known for his expertise fishing not only all over Florida, but all over the world.

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 26th This meeting is important to attend for several reasons. We will be electing the 2022 board members and officers. If you're interested in serving on the board, please contact any board member through the club website. We'll also be announcing the winners of the fall tournament held on October 9th out of Cedar Key. Need another reason to attend our October meeting? How about Captain Danny Allen. Captain Allen will be discussing inshore fishing in the Cedar Key area. This will be a great opportunity to learn and ask questions to help improve your odds of winning our upcoming Redfish and trout tournament out of Steinhatchee on November 13th. Our last special event of the year, the Ellett Auction (which happens to be my favorite), has been scheduled for November 19th. Please watch your email, Facebook, and our website for further details on all upcoming events.

Tight lines and see ya on the water!

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Upcoming Events

October Meeting
Tuesday, October 26th, 2019

Fellowship starts at 7:00 PM
Meeting proper starts at 7:30

Speaker: Captain Danny Allen

Captain Danny Allen, owner and operator of Southern Salt Charters, grew up in Cedar Key and has spent his life fishing the area's back country and flats. He has made appearances on several nationally televised fishing shows and is the organizer of the Elite Redfish Challenge series of fishing tournaments.

Location: UF Vet School - VAB Auditorium.
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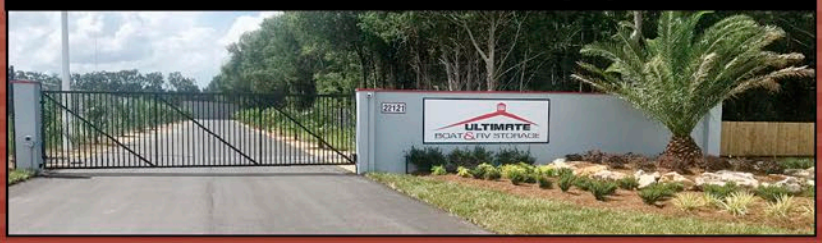

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Snook Fishing in the Big Bend

By Bill Gair

Last year the club was kind and let me share some thoughts on Tarpon fishing along our fishery, this year I am sharing some thoughts about our growing snook fishery.

Snook are among the most sought after gamefish in our state. Historically snook were found along the coastal regions of the gulf but not further North than Tarpon Springs. Today “common snook” are found in our local waters. One can target snook in Crystal River, Yankeetown and Cedar key (all GOFC areas). I hear of catches up as far north as the Suwannee River.

Everyone targets these species in different manners, albeit I am generally a live bait guy. In the months of April through October, live bait is readily available to be netted. I like to target schools of scaled sardines or threadfins before a snook outing. I through a 12’ Barracuda 3/8 mesh cast net.

The snook will also readily eat pinfish which many folks find much easier to harvest. The bait cannot be too large for a snook. I have even used live ladyfish and large mullet for snook bait!

I use tackle similar to what I would use for redfish. 7' or 7'-6" spinning rod and a 3000-4000 series reel. I go with 30-50# fluorocarbon leader and a 4-6/0 circle hook dependent on bait size. I like to free line the bait in areas where I expect to find snook.

Snook are a hard fighting fish that perform spectacular jumps. It's important to check your line after each fish. Snook don't have teeth but their mouths are very abrasive and every fish you catch will weaken your leader. Be sure to replace the leader when the damage becomes noticeable.

Regarding venues, there are multitudes of areas that are now popular snook fisheries. In Crystal River there is Kings Bay, the Crystal River, the Salt River, and the spoil banks especially at short point and long point.

In Yankeetown snook are frequently caught in the Withlacoochee River from the Yankeetown Marina all the way down to the mouth down to the mouth with the areas around Chambers Island, Drum Island, and Captain Joe Island being popular spots.

In Cedar key – each of the keys where redish are normally caught including the Channel bars and the Corrigans area all hold nice snook. Many club members have also been targeting snook on nearshore structure where they fish for other species like cobia and grouper.

It is currently snook season in our local gulf waters and the season will remain open until December 1st. Snook can be harvested in a slot of 28” – 33” and they taste great! So get out there, and get yourself a big linesider!

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1st place - Houston Swearingen 1.88lb
2nd place - Greg Swearingen 1.77lb
3rd place - Jerry Brown 1.67lb

BASS STRINGER:
1st place - Greg Swearingen 8.35lb
2nd place - Tommy Turner & Crew 6.17lb
3rd place - Jerry Brown & Crew 5.83lb

LARGEST TROUT:
1st place - Andrew Fagan 2.44lb
2nd place - Brad Rohrbacher 2.33lb
3rd place - Tyler Jacobs 2.06lb

TROUT STRINGER:
1st place - Brad Rohrbacher & Crew 7.47lb
2nd place - Kyle Hill & Crew 7.05lb
3rd place - Vince Pilcher & Crew 5.94lb

LARGEST REDFISH:
1st place - Russell Dingman 5.99lb
2nd place - Tyler Jacobs 5.50lb
3rd place - Andrew Fagan 5.48lb

LARGEST GROUPER:
1st place - Luke Hahn 10.67lb
2nd place - David Bozeman 10.27lb
3rd place - John King 9.35lb

LARGEST SPANISH:
1st place - John Hayes 1.86lb
2nd place - Joe Sprouse 1.70lb
3rd place - Will Peebles .97lb

GROUPER STRINGER:
1st place - Luke Hahn & Crew 19.99lb
2nd place - David Bozeman & Crew 18.86lb

KIDS DIVISION:
1st place - Evan Peebles 4.55lb Redfish
2nd place - Kaedric Molitor 2.33lb Bass

SLAM AWARD:
Brad Rohrbacher - Trout, Reds, Spanish
Burt Pilcher & Crew - Trout, Reds, Spanish

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On the Hunt for Spanish Mackerel

By Ed Ellett

I was shocked to look at the annual Men's Division and Elite Division scoreboard and see multiple top angler award winners Tim Pedersen and Virgil Cooper did not have a Spanish Mackerel entry – very unusual for this late in the year!!!!

Spanish Mackerel have always been a personal favorite of mine to catch and eat (an inherited trait from my father). Dad taught me a technique or two to catch them that work well. Coupled with a recent purchase of a new 20' used boat, allowing three to fish a little more comfortably than my 16 footer. I thought I could help these two pros cover the Spanish category for a multi-repeat winning of the ten species slam award. I extended a joint invitation for a trip to Seahorse Reef, and promptly heard back from Virgil that they were in.

On the appointed day, Tim had a conflict so it was just Virgil and I. We met in Cedar Key at 7:30, and Virgil already had shrimp for us to use as bait. With a front just passing through, and a brisk North/Northeast wind of 15-20 mph, we opted to fish inshore that morning. Virgil cast netted a nice supply of mud minnows and showed me his Flounder fishing technique and a couple of his favorite flounder spots.

The net man (me) was ten seconds too late to net Virgil's first flounder (fortunately, for the net man, it appeared to be shy of 14" minimum size limit). The net man did much better on the second Flounder, and, put a nice legal fish in the boat. Not a large one, but an improvement on Virgil's present entry. And for those that want to know, the net man did not catch a Flounder. The net man took Virgil's advice and imitated his technique, yet, may have used up all his Flounder luck when he caught a 3+ pound Flounder off the Crystal River Barge Canal earlier in the year.

By mid morning, the wind started to wane and we headed to Seahorse Reef with brief stop at number one channel marker on way out.

We both cast jigs around marker into a ripping tide. I caught one small Cobia. A thirty one incher (two inches shy of minimum), and, my fourth small Cobia I have caught this year. I think I used up all my Cobia luck when I caught my personal best Cobia while fishing as a guest of Ken Knopf a few years back.

We headed on to Seahorse Reef. The water was choppy so we had the place to ourselves. We started trolling. I offered Virgil the same jig/fish strip rig I was using and he declined and opted to use his well trained spoon rig. We trolled and trolled the reef's edge. No birds sited, no bait dimpling the surface, and tannin stained water. At least the surface was not covered with grass and we could troll. I was thinking, maybe it's a good thing Tim Pedersen was not able to join us…..

Fortunately, I hadn't used up all my Spanish Mackerel luck, and, finally I got a nice Spanish on and boated – in the three pound range. Still, we had done thirty minutes of trolling and only had one strike. We hadn't even been able to attract a Ladyfish! Thereafter, the action began to pick up. Virgil caught a Ladyfish and I caught a micro Mackerel. Then Virgil caught a Bluefish and I caught a Gulf Runner. We stayed in the action area and Virgil caught a couple of nice Spanish in the three and a half pound range. Mission accomplished – yeh! He may improve the size before the year is done, yet, but for now he has a very respectable entry. I kept catching micro Mackerel so they would not bother Virgil.

The wind continued to subside, we had our "bird in hand", so we decided to pursue the one in the bush: a legal Cobia or King. We fished the Iron Beacon the outside of Seahorse Reef and sited two micro Cobia and had one hooked briefly. We ran to the Dry Dock and drifted over it several times each contributing a jig to the treasure trove of tackle left on the wreck by other anglers. A school a Crevalle Jack smashed into bait nearby – always amazing to see, but not our target. We looped back toward Cedar Key, anchoring on the Kingfish grounds in a spot that has productive in the past. Virgil tried live mud minnow, and, I tried live Shiner. No action so we headed in.

An enjoyable aspect of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club is to always pursue the Ten Slam Award whether you are close, or don't have a prayer to win. Occasionally, club members may view the standings and think they can help you fill a slot triggering a nice fishing invitation. Over the years, I've been on both sides of the coin – it creates nice fellowship and learning opportunities.

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Recent Catches

Angler	Species	Weight	Date Caught	Location	Lure/Bait
Tim Pedersen	Grouper - Gag	10.1 lbs	10/9/2021	Cedar Key	Lure
Tim Pedersen	King Mackeral	12.15 lbs	10/9/2021	Cedar Key	Lure
Tim Pedersen	Spanish Mackeral	3.67 lbs	10/3/2021	Cedar key	Lure
Ross McElroy	Spanish Mackeral	3.4 lbs	9/27/2021	Cedar Key	Spoon
Chic Hinton	Bluefish	1.19 lbs	9/21/2021	Cedar Key	Spoon
Tim Pedersen	Spanish Mackeral	2.77 lbs	9/24/2021	Cedar Key	Lure
Ross McElroy	Redfish	6.1 lbs	8/30/2021	Cedar Key	Cut Bait
Chic Hinton	Spanish Mackeral	4.38 lbs	9/20/2021	Cedar Key	Spoon
Ed Ellett	Bluefish	2.52 lbs	9/16/2021	Snake Key flats	Gulp
Dale Reed	Flounder	1.9 lbs	9/18/2021	Yankeetown	Shrimp

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Saltwater Fishing Report - October 21, 2021

By Gary Simpson

The season's initial cooldown always gives fishing along the gulf's Big Bend a shot in the arm. That shot is being reported now — primarily by fishers casting in the shallows. This has not been a stellar year for speckled trout fishing, but the trout stories through recent days have been considerably better. The best of the trout fishing seems to be north of Suwannee, all the way up to Keaton Beach.

The good recent mackerel action also continued over the weekend on Seahorse Reef, off Cedar Key.

Another angler said he and his crew tried bottom fishing out a little deeper and filled gag grouper limits Saturday and Sunday in short order. The most impressive part of this story was that their good catches, made with live pinfish, were made within eyesight of the Cedar Key islands.

Success is not guaranteed, though. Still others say they have encountered dirty water, along with evidence that the late-season spat of red tide that has not altogether cleared out.

The mission of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club is

to promote and support recreational saltwater fishing in the Big Bend area;

to provide educational and recreational experiences for its members of all ages;

and to promote responsible conservation of saltwater resources.