The Acute Angler

December, 2021
Volume 54, Number 12

The monthly newsletter of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club

December Hot Shot

Doing Something Right!

December is known for being a great time for catching grouper and Eric Horn will certainly agree after reeling up this beauty. At 15.3 lbs, this gag grouper was heavy enough to give Erich the lead in the Grouper Category for the 2021 Ellet Contest. Not bad for Erich's first ever grouper fishing trip! Then again when you've got Mark Rustemier as your captain and Ed Ellet acting as first mate, you're already off to a pretty good start!

In this Edition

Upcoming Events P3
No upcoming events

Trolling for Inshore Grouper P5
By Jeff Gartland

FWC Updates P9

Recent Catches P11

Fishing Report P12
From Gary's Tackle Box

President's Corner

By Mark Haberman

GOFC President

December 2021 is nearly a memory now. We've enjoyed some calm seas as of late but had to endure several foggy mornings. I hope you've had a chance to enjoy some of the best fishing of the year. Offshore, gag grouper have been chewing hard, hogfish are getting very plentiful, and sheepshead are starting to show up on offshore structure. Inshore has seen some very low winter tides, pushing redfish into deeper holes and creeks. All these fishing opportunities can make it difficult for a fisherman to prioritize their life. But with Christmas right around the corner, please park the boat and take time to spend with friends and family. Without them, fishing would not be any fun. I hope you and your family have the best Christmas ever, we certainly deserve it after all we've endured over the last two years.

Tight lines and see ya on the water!

20931 Northeast Highway 27
Williston, FL 32696
(352) 443-5820

COUNTRYSIDE MARINA & SERVICES

Specializing in the repair and servicing of

All Outboard Motors as well as Mercruiser Inboard/Outboard Motors

This June and July GOFC members receive 10% off labor costs for annual services!

Authorized Dealer:

Upcoming Events

No upcoming events just yet. Have a happy and safe holiday season!

STEAM CLEAN
POWERFUL STEAM MACHINE FOR CARPET, UPHOLSTERY, TILE & GROUT
CUSTOMIZED
HOUSE CLEANING
PRESSURE WASHING
WINDOW CLEANING
10% OFF
ANY SPECIALTY SERVICE
(EXCLUDING HOUSE CLEANING)
RUB A DUB DUB
352.336.8570
www.rubadubcleaning.com

CHAPARRAL BOATS
BULLS BAY
ROBALO BOATS
KW
BOSTON WHALER
Futch's Marine Depot Inc.
100 N.E 23rd Avenue, Gainesville FL 32609 • 352-372-4900

STATE-OF-THE-ART SECURE STORAGE
NO MOVE-IN FEES OR DEPOSITS
CONVENIENT ROUTE TO I-75
ACCESS ANYTIME
24/7

ULTIMATE BOAT & RV STORAGE

When you're not out enjoying your big toys, store them safely with us!

WHERE BOYS STORE THEIR TOYS

Discounts available! Ask for specials!

COVERED, ENCLOSED OR OPEN PARKING
Month-to-Month leases • Pre-pay discounts

- Hurricane-Resistant Steel Canopy Covers
- 24-Hour Self Service Check-In
- Automated Security Flood Lights
- Covered Wash Station
- Air Station for Tire Inflation (90*/120psi)
- Sanitary Dump Station
- Self-Service Ice Machine
- Security Access Keypads
- 24/7 Recorded Security Cameras
- High Security Fencing
- Electric Service (15, 30 & 50 amp)
- Facility Fire Extinguisher Stations

Easy Online Account Management & Payments

Call or visit our website today for more information

UltimateBoatRVStorage.com

22211 WEST NEWBERRY RD. • NEWBERRY, FLORIDA 32669 • 352-472-3337

Late Season Amberjack Run

By Ken Knopf

With the season for amberjack running out the end of October I got the itch to make a trip to some far offshore wrecks to strain some muscles on reef donkeys! Set out from Cedar Key bright and early with crew consisting of my wife Debby, Tim Pederson and Virgil Cooper. Always makes the day when you have such a competitive crew to keep you on your toes!

First stop was Seahorse reef, anchored up to chum and Sabiki up a good supply

of live pinfish. Several other boats were in the area trolling for Spanish mackerel, so before we headed over the western horizon we decided to get a few . I set up to do the traditional 2 to 3 knot trolling pattern with small jigs that you work back and forth with wide arm sweeps. Tim and Virgil interceded with “that’s ok if you want to catch small ones”. They then took over and showed us their fast trolling technique. We put out large drone spoons far back in the wake and picked up speed to five and six knots. I’m thinking this is more of a kingfish technique but darned if it didn’t help sort out the larger size Spanish!

With dinner safely on ice we headed for our first stop in 90 feet . This is a houseboat reportedly surreptitiously placed by a commercial grouper fisherman many years ago. As we pulled over the spot you could see the clusters of solid red marks of amberjack on the depth finder moving up from the wreck to see what we might have for them. We all scrambled to get baits in the water and were quickly hooked up. Action was steady, only problem was they were almost all just short of the 34 inch legal size. If you have ever been on a hot amberjack bite you know that these fish can wear you out! When you get these fish near the boat the rest of the school sticks with them and you can look down in the crystal clear water and see them. We saw there was a group of larger AJ mixing in and out of the main school.

Debby and Tim both got keepers from that bunch but Virgil and I seemed to be stuck with the just under legal size. One of mine looked like it might have made the cut so I was playing it in carefully when a large shark decided it was lunch time! Amazing to watch the brutality of it when it happens right in front of you!

Realizing that Virgil and I might get skunked if we stayed on this spot I made the decision to move to another wreck even further offshore that gets less fishing pressure. It’s a shrimp boat in 122 feet almost seventy miles from the dock.

Debby and Tim for the most part were cheering us on since their one fish limits were already in the box. Tim however couldn’t resist teasing the barracuda hanging close to the surface over this wreck. He gets a nice sized probably four footer on and is enjoying the fight, as he gets it near the boat probably twenty five feet out it launches itself like rocket with teeth sailing over his head, over the top of the hardtop and glances off the far side of the hardtop before reentry into the water! We all saw it but it was one of those things that happened so fast none of us even moved!

Then my mind went into overdrive and thought what if it had a lower trajectory and had hit Tim or Debby who were sitting at the helm directly under its path! I need to check my first aid kit and make sure I have suture material for the future!

After that excitement we got back to business. There were

MILLERS BOATING CENTER

HELPING YOU ENJOY THE WATER FOR OVER 40 YEARS

STARCRAFT MARINE · Triton BOATS · CAROLINA SKIFF · BLACKFIN · LOWE BOATS · SEAARK BOATS · SunChaser · SYLVAN PONTOONS & FISHING BOATS · GatorTail OUTBOARDS · MERCURY · YAMAHA · TIDE WATER BOATS · SEA CHASER By Carolina Skiff

Tis the Season!

COSTA

Over 150 Pair In Stock!

FREE Gift with Purchase!

MINN KOTA SHALLOW WATER ANCHOR TALON

In Stock!

RAPTOR

POWER-POLE SHALLOW WATER ANCHOR

SWIFT. SILENT. SECURE.

In Stock!

RIVERS EDGE PRODUCTS

10% OFF In Stock Products!

AFTCO

Columbia Sportswear Company

25% OFF All Reg. Priced Columbia & Aftco Clothing In Stock!

FISHERMAN'S RULES

Only Fish on Days that End in "Y"
No Peein' off the Boat
All Rocks & Weeds must be Thrown Back
When in Doubt, Exaggerate!

SIGNS

Rapala Knives

In Stock! 10% OFF

10% OFF ORCA

All Orca Coolers & Drinkware In Stock

DOOR MATS

MINN KOTA

Minn Kota Trolling Motors In Stock!

www.MillersBoating.com

2 Miles North of Ocala on Hwy 441 • 1661 NW 57th St.

352-622-7757 • 877-898-1463 • sales@millersboating.com

Find us on: facebook

a few short fish on this wreck as well but most we saw swimming below us were monsters! With considerable effort and some luck I boated a 43 inch keeper weighing about 39 pounds. Now the remaining objective was Virgil getting his. He had a big one break off his rig . If you have fished with Virgil you know he believes in using heavy rods and reels for big fish. Rather than rerigging his rod I handed him one of mine that was set to go, he immediately hooked up on one of big fish we could see. Although it was a much lighter outfit he loosened the drag and fought it masterfully, bringing in the largest (no surprise) AJ of the day.

While we were on that spot we looked out and saw something small swimming on the surface towards the boat, logically you would think a crab. No this turned out to be a Cuban tree frog, seemingly alive and well. He tried to hitch a ride on the side of the boat. Might be an alternative explanation how some of these invasive species made it to Florida!

Turned out to be a successful day but shows you can't always tell what might happen way out there!

A New Club Record!

By Ryan Kremser

Early this month, Ed Ellett reeled in this 2.08 lb Atlantic Croaker to set a new club record. With this fish, Ed obliterated the previous club record of 1.58 lbs.

Some have expressed concern for Ed's safety and well being considering that the previous record was held by Ed's wife Marcia Ellett, but as of this writing Ed assures us that he is alive and well. Ed says that Marcia, always the good sport, even netted the fish for him and didn't even try to knock if off the hook!

Way to go team Ellett!

WATSON
Watson Realty Corp. REALTORS®

Mark Robinson, Realtor

352.215.7265

"Don't wait to buy real estate. Buy real estate and wait." -*Will Rogers*

Let's Go Fishing!

MLS
REALTOR

AFL

ALACHUA FARM & LUMBER

EST. 1984

SOFT BAITS by:

Bass Assassin · Zoom · Berkley Gulp! · Reaction Innovations

HARD BAITS by:

Mirrolure · Rapala · Johnson · & Many More!

COSTA DEL MAR
see what's out there

Over 144 Pair In Stock!

FREE Glass Cleaner & Sunglass Retainer with Each Costa Purchase

RODS & REELS by:

Lew's · Abu Garcia · Shimano · Daiwa · okuma · Carolina Stix · Penn · Shakespeare · Zebco

and Many More!

If we do not have it in stock, we can order it!

10% OFF COUPON

on Boots, Apparel & Sporting Goods

MUST HAVE THIS COUPON

CHECK OUT OUR NEW STORE

T3 Outdoors

off Exit 22 in Valdosta, GA. for ALL Your Sporting Goods Needs!

Come See Wayne, Linda & Staff @ AFL and Jud & Candace @ T3 for All Your Woods & Water Needs!

FULL GUN, ARCHERY, FRESH & SALTWATER FISHING PRO SHOP

GUNS, BOOTS & EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN!!

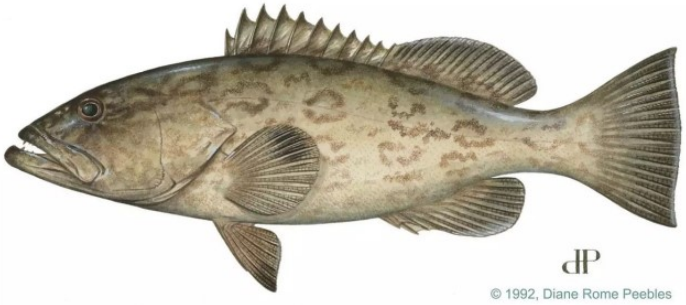
14101 N.W. 145th Ave • Alachua, FL 386-462-3003

FWC Updates

Grouper and snapper season changes to look for Jan. 1 in Gulf and Atlantic

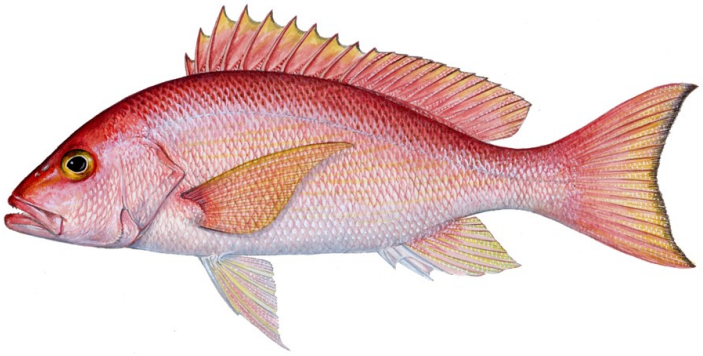
Several species of grouper and snapper will either open or close to harvest in Gulf and Atlantic state waters starting Jan. 1.

- Red grouper will reopen to recreational harvest in Gulf state waters (excluding Monroe County).

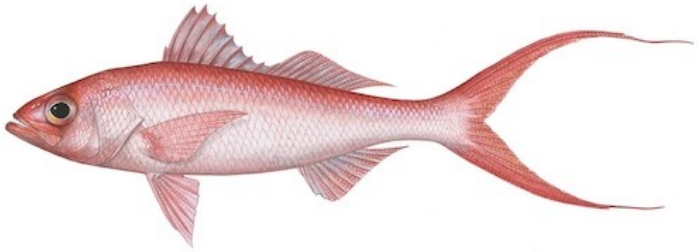


- Gag grouper will close to recreational harvest in Gulf state waters. Gag, black, red, yellowmouth and yellowfin grouper; scamp; red hind; rock hind; coney; and graysby will close to recreational and commercial harvest in Atlantic state waters (including Monroe County).

Blackfin Snapper



Silk Snapper



Queen Snapper

- Blackfin, silk, queen and wenchman snappers will reopen to recreational and commercial harvest in Gulf state waters.
- If you are boating or fishing in the Atlantic this winter, please be on the lookout for North Atlantic Right Whales. These endangered mammals are extremely hard to spot and collisions have caused costly damage to boats, put passengers and crew at risk, and injured and killed right whales. With fewer than 350 left, right whales are one of the world's most endangered large whale species. Learn more about what you can do to prevent right whale collisions at MyFWC.com/Research by clicking “Wildlife.”

Ellett
Insurance working for you.

- Life Insurance for dying too soon.
- Annuities for preserving what you have.
- Long Term Care Insurance when longevity becomes challenging.
- Home, Auto, Boat, Umbrella, Disability and Business Insurance for the challenges in between.

Ed Ellett, CPCU, CLU, CIC

905 NW 56th Terrace, Suite A, Gainesville 32605

www.EllettIns.com

Auto-Owners
INSURANCE

Recent Catches

Angler	Species	Weight	Date Caught	Location	Lure/Bait
Tim Pedersen	King Mackeral	17.49 lbs	12/31/2021	Cedar Key	Lure
Ed Ellett	Redfish	6.26 lbs	12/29/2021	Keaton Beach	Gulp
Ed Ellett	Grouper - Gag	14.96 lbs	12/15/2021	Cedar Key - 60'	Dead bait
Melvina J. Cutright	Redfish	2.7 lbs	12/6/2021	Steinhatchee	Jig and shrimp
Ed Ellett	Atlantic Croaker	2.14 lbs	12/5/2021	Steinhatchee River	Jig
Dale Reed	Grouper - Gag	14.68 lbs	11/28/2021	Cedar Key	Lure
Dale Reed	Redfish	4.68 lbs	11/13/2021	Steinhatchee	Cut bait
Chic Hinton	Grouper - Gag	9.875 lbs	11/30/2021	Cedar Key	Fish Head
Dale Reed	Seatrout	3.9 lbs	11/13/2021	Steinhatchee	Slick
Allen Turner	Seatrout	5.45 lbs	11/12/2021	Barnett Creek	DOA Shrimp
Carl Vining	Grouper - Gag	10.648 lbs	11/2/2021	Cedar Key	Trolling plug
Chic Hinton	Flounder	2.00 lbs	10/27/2021	Cedar Key	Mullet

Saltwater Fishing Report - December 30, 2021

By Gary Simpson

All-in-all, 2021 was a good fishing year for us in North Florida. A rainy start made for some good things in our lakes but did no favors for gulf rivers or salty inshore Big Bend fans. Not until late spring did the Big Bend shallows clear. Then the end of hot weather brought the threat of red tide that, thankfully, ended up not affecting us a lot. Aside from these negatives, fishing was generally fine. It could be said that the summer of 2021 was a sub-par one for speckled trout fishing on the gulf flats, but the great number of trout that arrived with the coming of cool weather made up for that.

George Deloach and Greg Brown, anglers from Gainesville and High Springs, fished Friday out of Steinhatchee. They ran north out of the river and quickly found an active speckled trout and redfish bite.

The anglers caught fish through the day at a nice pace, but the last spot of the day, with the tide now higher, really made the fishing day special. Casting floating/diving twitch baits, the anglers found not just a large wad of trout — but a large wad of very large trout.

They hooked fish that were uniformly hefty, losing a few but boating eight that were each at least 25-inches long. While present in good number, the men found that the fish were quite particular regarding the size and color of lure they would strike. And that part the anglers would not divulge.

This week was the last one to harvest Gulf gag grouper for a few months. Offshore anglers were thankful that the last week of 2021 offered weather about as nice as they could have reasonably hoped for.

Mike English and his well-experienced crew ran out from Steinhatchee on Sunday to water 70 feet deep. Fishing natural bait on the bottom, they filled a fine six-person limit of good sized gags. Nothing, however, to compare with the giant gag grouper that Mike wrested from deeper water two weeks ago. That fish, at 49-inches long and 38-pounds, was his personal best. But then, it would have been a PB for nearly every grouper angler, anywhere.

Happy New Year from all of us at Gary's.

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.