The Acute Angler

November, 2022
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The monthly newsletter of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club

November Hot Shot

That proves it!

Captain Mark Rustemier knows that lizard fish are good gag grouper bait and now you do to. Mark caught this big gag on an October trip offshore with Ed Ellett and friends.

We're glad to have Mark back in town and interested to see some more of his bait/catch combinations.

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President's Corner

By Ross McElroy

GOFC President

GOFC started 2022 without a president. The Club finally picked up a reluctant volunteer from the bargain rack of old and very used board members, me, and we nervously headed into year three of COVID. It felt like GOFC, as with so many other organizations and businesses was in danger of collapse. As we approach the end of 2022 things are now in a bit better shape. COVID is still with us but an end to the worst of this epidemic may be in sight. But like after the immediate danger of a hurricane has ended, we still struggle with all the damages from COVID.

Back when we started the year, membership and sponsors were down. Most events were often poorly attended Zoom meetings or not being held at all. Our finances were a cause for concern. Membership morale was, shall we say at a low level and with the lack of in-person events, membership had fallen off.

I believe the November 2021 GOFC Auction marked the turnaround point for the club. The weather was cooperative and the auction was held on schedule. The attendance was great, and the food, prepared by Virgil and Timmy, was fantastic. The auction was a huge success, thanks in large part to the generosity of Hal and Jan Wilson., the club received a large amount of very good fishing and hunting equipment for auction. Hal was a long term member of GOFC, served as a board member and as Club President in the past. Hal passed away after being injured in an accidental fall earlier in 2021. His fishing tackle alone really helped the club reverse most of our immediate financial problems. Hal continued to serve the GOFC even after he was no longer with us. We should all say a big thank you to Hal and Jan Wilson!

So why am I more optimistic for 2023? We, as a fishing club, had a good 2022. Membership is up, finances are better and we have significantly more participation in events. Tournaments are being held and learnaments have come back on the schedule. Catching large numbers of huge (up to 8 inches long) shrimp in the Gulf was a big bonus, since many of us were happy with the prospect of just learning to throw a cast net. Our general (speaker) meetings have been both informative and well attended. The "Annual Oyster Roast", long a favorite GOFC social event was finally brought back to life in April, thanks to Ed and Shelia Crapo

for generously sharing their house and grounds and to Virgil and Timmy who are great chefs in addition to their catching most of the fish in the club each year. They also do all the cooking for the annual spring "Awards and Seafood Banquet", which was very much a big success. We may have found a new venue for future events. Membership feedback on the Ironwood Golf Club banquet hall was very positive. Our August "Social and Bar-b-que" sponsored by and held at the Ultimate Boat and RV Storage in Newberry was fantastic. Over 100 folks attended the event. We even had several new members join the club. Thanks to Todd and all the folks at Ultimate Boat and RV Storage.

Looking to the future, several new members have joined the GOFC Board. New members bring new ideas, fresh insights, and energy. This is the way to progress. Welcome to our new board members Mark Rustemier, Al Clements, Dawn Cross, and John Ebbs.

And a special "shout out" to BOD members who have done a special job this year. First a special thanks to our two resident fish catching chefs Virgil Cooper and Timmy Pedersen. I agree with you. You shouldn't have to supply all the fish and then have to cook them for the rest of us to eat. From now on you catch- you eat. The club can supply the fish. Secretary Tom Jaworski has kept us on task in meetings and done a great job with the minutes and records. Treasurer Debby Knopf has kept us on the right financial track and has things under control money wise. Chic Hinton has handled raffles, door prizes and name tags and has taken a big interest in getting the tournament committee going again. Tom Bacsik has handled getting better pizza for the speaker meetings and at a better price. Thanks to Carl Vining for getting water and sodas to the meetings, and more recently keeping the Ellett contest entries up to date and to Ken Knopf who has handled purchasing the raffle prizes, trying to keep the cost within our budget. A special thanks to Vice president and President-elect Ryan Kremser for all his help and support to your reluctant, bargain rack, president. I look forward to his tenure as our leader. He is already working on ways to make things better for the club in addition to handling all our emails and announcements to the membership. Finally, thanks to Jeff Gartland who took over this year as Acute Angler editor and has done an outstanding job. The newsletters are fantastic.

Now my final point and question. What are you willing to do in this next year to help make the GOFC a better club in 2023? Give me a call or email me at president@gofc.us if you like. I have some ideas where help is needed and welcome.

Your bargain rack president for 2022,

Ross McElroy OUT!!!

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Let's Go Fishing!

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Upcoming Events

November 12, 2022 Shallow Water Grouper Learnament, Cancelled due to TS Nicolle.

November 18, 2022—Ellett Auction at Ed and Marcia Ellett's home.

December 3, 2022 - Redfish/Trout Roundup Tournament/Steinhatchee.

Monthly Meetings—Next General meeting is January 24, 2023. Upcoming meetings will be announced by email. Typically we meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Veterinary Academic Building .Fellowship begins at 7:00 pm and the meeting proper begins at 7:30.

From the Editor

By Jeff Gartland

GOFC Editor

There is so much going on this time of year that it's hard to focus. Fishing is great, hunting is happening and the Florida Gators football team just won back –to-back games. So, my column will be short, but I do want to point out what's happened to the recreational grouper regulations.

Grouper news/regulation changes
Two rules regarding recreational grouper fishing were posted lately, each one **limiting the recreational catch:**

- *Recreational harvest for red grouper in Gulf state waters will close August 30, 2022.*In years past the season has seen no closure or closed much later in the year.
- *The 2023 recreational season for gag grouper in Gulf state waters will be open Sept. 1 – Nov. 10.* The 2022 gag grouper season ran June 1 – December 31. This is a 66% reduction in the gag grouper season.

Each of these rulings is "intended to maintain the fisheries". Yeah, maybe so, but it seldom goes the other way. Your thoughts?

Ways to help your club

There are so many ways to help out, just of which are:

- **Write an article** for the Acute Angler newsletter. A day of saltwater fishing is a lot more challenging than writing about something you know. Like getting back to port after a long day on the water, seeing your article published feels pretty good. **newsletter@gofc.us**
- **Help manage the website**. If you have skills in websites building/management we have a continuous need to keep the GOFC website fresh GOFC website
- **Help out at tournaments**, members only banquets and general meetings.
- **Submit your favorite fishing photos** (see next paragraph).

Please feel free to contact **newsletter@gofc.us** if you have any questions, and as always:

All members are encouraged to submit photos to the GOFC website. Here's the link: Photo Submission Form. Submitted photos will be displayed on our Hot Shots page: GOFC Hot Shots. If you want to show off a catch, a new boat, capture a fun trip, or just get your fishing buddy or family on the website here's your chance.
Please don't hesitate because you think it's "not good enough". If you like it, that's all that matters.

Hot Shot photos are automatically entered in the year end photo contest. Prizes are 1st Place $150, 2nd Place $100, 3rd Place $50.
The winners of the 2021 Photo Contest are featured in the February issue. Look it over. Maybe you'll win 2022. Worst case, you'll be sharing a memory.

I look forward to hearing from you at **newsletter@gofc.us** and sharing the tremendous depth of knowledge and experience within the GOFC membership.

Jeff Gartland/GOFC Editor

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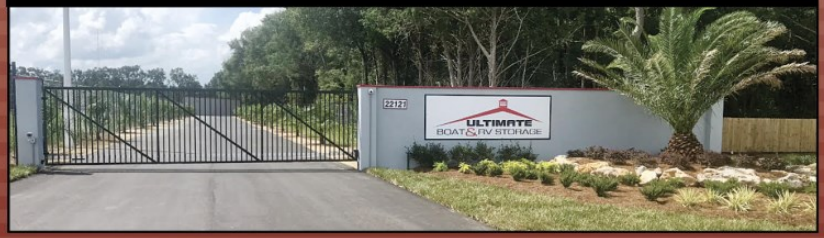

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Chic's "Nothing but the Truth" Fishing Report

by Chic Hinton

GONE HUNTING.

Back to fishing soon.

See you next month,
Chic

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50/50 FISHING

By Al Clements

There are two key factors in becoming an elite inshore angler.

The number one factor is the SCIENCE and number two is the SKILL.

Both require study and practice in order to become a consistent inshore angler.

Before you ever get in your vehicle to go fishing make sure you make a plan for that day. Know the conditions of your targeted area and the species of fish you are targeting.

In order to make the best assessment you must study the wind speed, the wind direction, the tides, the temperature of the water, the food source of the species you are targeting, the water clarity, the size of your lure that matches the bait, the depth and drop offs, and the presentation of the lure or lures you are using.

If you follow the assessments above and know at least 5 different areas that you will be fishing, you will have success.

Notice I said lures and not live bait. Finding the fish is the key to success. Live bait will slow you down. Pinfish or trash fish will eat it and that takes time to get them off your hook and put another bait on. Lures give you the advantage of covering more area and spending less time rebaiting. Fishing is a numbers game. Fifteen minutes on one spot of no productivity is the maximum time. I have seen live bait fisherman spend hours in one spot catching a small number of fish when the angler with lures catches the limit almost every time.

To understand the science of fishing you must make yourself study and plan before you head out. This will take time to get the factors down to an automatic response but once you do the results are unbelievable.

Now that you are starting to study and understand the SCIENCE, the second factor comes into play: SKILL.

If you don't have the skill to cast your lure where the fish are, the science will not help you. Also, you must have the skill to properly present the lure to your targeted species. So many inshore fishermen are using tackle that is way too heavy for inshore fishing.

When targeting inshore fish, a 2500 to 3000 spinning reel is all that is needed. If using braid, I use no more than 10 pound. The leader size will depend on the species you are targeting. I use 20lb for all species other than snook and then I go to 30lb. I prefer mono rather than Fluorocarbon. Number one it is stronger and less abrasive, and number 2 it cost less. If I am casting to oyster beds I use 30lb leader line.

There is also a skill in fighting your fish properly. The angle of your rod many times will determine the success of landing the fish or not. That is why they call us Anglers.

Practice casting your rod and reel of choice with the exact line and leader you will be using. I go to Santa Fe College and target different areas in a 360 degree motion. That way you are casting with the wind and against the wind. I also have mastered both the spinning and the bait casting reels. There are some conditions that the spinning reel will not get my lure where it needs to be. Also, by using different reels I have found that my hands don't get cramped after several hundred casts in a day.

Understanding both your equipment and the science will make you a consistent and complete angler.

Announcing the 2022 GOFC Auction on Friday, November 18th at the Ellett's home in Gainesville Starting at 6:30 PM

What is it?

The GOFC auction and social event is one of the club's highlights for each year. Hosted by Ed and Marcia Ellett at their beautiful home on Payne's Prairie, the auction starts with a low country boil and ends with a raucously entertaining auction of gently used fishing gear, artwork, and other odds and ends. All proceeds from the auction go to the club's general fund and constitute a large portion of the club's event and prize budget for each year.

In addition to the low country boil, Tim and Virgil will be cooking up some clam chowder and grilling hamburgers and hot dogs. The club will also provide sodas and water. Members are asked to bring a side dish or desert to share. Members are also welcome to bring adult beverages of their choice.

Since this event is an important fund raiser for the club, members are asked to bring unwanted or under-utilized tackle and outdoor gear in good condition for donation to the auction. This is a great opportunity to clear out some space in the garage and make room new gear!

Bring the family for an evening of fun, delicious food, and an opportunity to pick up great tackle at a discount while supporting the club!

When and Where?

Friday, November 18th starting at 6:30 PM at 2901 SW 70th Lane in Gainesville. (Traveling west on Williston Rd, just west of I-75, take SW 35th Drive by the Kangaroo Gas Station. Then go south until the road turns to the right and becomes SW 70th Lane. The Elletts' house is the 2nd one on the left).

This is a members only event.

What to Bring:

1. Unwanted or under-utilized tackle and outdoor gear in good condition for donation to the auction
2. A side dish or desert to share
3. Warm clothes if the weather is cool or bug repellent if the weather is warm

You Ask, We Answer!

We've started this column to respond to your questions and suggestions. A number of members have written in asking for information on the increased presence of large **Atlantic white shrimp** in our Big Bend waters. Charlie Courtney writes about this in a three part series:

1- Basic biology and life history –September

2-Catching shrimp—This issue

3-Preserving and cooking your catch—November

Atlantic White Shrimp in the Big Bend— Preserving and Cooking White Shrimp

By Charlie Courtney

Preserving and Cooking Shrimp

Shrimp are among the most perishable of our seafoods. It is imperative that they be iced as soon as possible after death and kept as cold as possible until they are either eaten or frozen for future use. Since shrimp freeze well, they should be promptly processed and frozen unless you cook them within a day or so. I have seen shrimp advertised in stores as "Fresh, Never Frozen", but they actually deteriorate if stored under refrigeration or in ice for more than a few days. Most "fresh" shrimp have been previously frozen and thawed and are O.K. if used promptly. The quality of shrimp that are frozen soon after harvest and thawed just before use will be much better than those that have been stored on ice in a boat and then in the merchant's display case for several days.

When I harvest shrimp, I empty my cast net into a large tub (16 gallon flexible plastic tub from Tractor Supply) that has a shallow layer of water in the bottom. This keeps the shrimp wet, and therefore alive until put on ice. Once I have accumulated a number of shrimp in the tub (or I need a break from throwing the cast net), I then move the shrimp into my cooler of ice, measuring the volume as I do so. If the shrimp are abundant, I try to allow about a gallon of shrimp to accumulate in the tub before I measure the volume and dump them into the cooler. I don't bother to measure if the shrimp are scarce and it does not look like I will get a limit.

Others will move their shrimp into a 5 gallon bucket to which ice is periodically added and excess melt water is drained. An old towel draped over the bucket keeps shrimp from hopping out as the bucket nears full. At the end of the day the shrimp are moved to a cooler of ice for the trip home. This method has the advantage of showing how close you are to catching a limit.

Cleaning Shrimp

To clean a shrimp, you first remove the head by twisting it off — do not cut it off. When done properly this often removes the vein as well. Then you remove the shell if desired. There are a number of methods and gadgets used to remove the shell. The two most popular are seafood scissors and the classic deveining tool. I prefer the scissors method, which does a little bit less damage to the meat than the classic deveining tool, thus I use a small pair of curved seafood scissors available from Amazon for under $10. Other people prefer to use a curved and pointed shrimp deveining tool, usually made of red or black plastic often available for less than $5. The scissors are used to cut the shell above the vein. The deveiner is pushed under the shell along the vein and out the tail end until the shell splits along the back of the shrimp. With either method the shell is then peeled off from the back down, removing the legs with the shell, and any remaining vein is removed by hand. The tail can be left on or off as desired. Regardless of the method used, thoroughly rinse the shrimp afterwards and cook or promptly ice or freeze.

Once I have returned home from a shrimping trip, I try to process my shrimp for freezing that same day or no later than the next day. There is a lot of disagreement as to how shrimp should be cleaned for freezing. Three approaches are used and proponents of each constantly argue as to which is better.

Some argue that shrimp should be frozen whole to preserve the best flavor. Others choose to twist off the heads but leave the shell on, claiming that this approach has little impact on flavor, but it reduces the freezer space used by nearly half. A third group prefers to fully clean and de-vein before freezing so that the shrimp are ready to cook immediately after thawing. Others will argue that this last approach is time consuming, sacrifices flavor, and makes the shrimp more subject to freezer burn. Regardless of the method you use it is important to keep your shrimp as cold as possible even while processing them.

I prefer the second method, but it is really just a matter of personal choice. The second method removes the hepatopancreas, a digestive organ in the back of the shrimp's head that can leak digestive enzymes and soften the shrimp's body if the shrimp is not kept cold after

death. Note, however, that shrimp must be landed whole, thus you may not remove the heads while on the boat.

There are also many choices as to what container to use when freezing shrimp. If you have lots of freezer space (or only a few shrimp) you can freeze shrimp in a Tupperware container filled with water. This is especially useful for those of you who freeze your shrimp whole as the rigid container can stand up to the spines on the head and tail, while being immersed in water prevents freezer burn. Those who completely clean their shrimp often freeze them in water in a Ziplock bag since there is no risk of spines puncturing the bag and the water reduces the risk of freezer burn. I use a third method in which I remove the heads, clip off the tail spine, and vacuum pack the shrimp in a Food Saver bag. A few people choose to wrap their shrimp in butcher paper before freezing in bags to prevent the spines from puncturing the Ziplock or Food Saver bag.

It is best to freeze shrimp in single meal quantities, although some people will flash freeze larger quantities of shrimp on wax paper lined baking sheets and then transfer the frozen, loose shrimp to a large vacuum bag for storage. This method allows you to remove only the number of shrimp needed for a meal, reseal the bag, and return it to the freezer. Regardless of the method used, I find that carefully frozen shrimp will keep for at least a year in a good quality deep freezer.

Cooking Shrimp

Shrimp can be cooked in a wide variety of ways: boiled shrimp, fried shrimp, broiled shrimp, blackened shrimp, grilled shrimp, or used in various stir fries, stews, and gumbos — the list goes on and on. No matter how you cook them, shrimp will soak up the nuances of any sauces and seasonings quite nicely if handled correctly.

One warning . . . shrimp will overcook surprisingly quickly, thus you need to pay close attention. Remember that for shrimp “C” means cooked and “O” means overcooked. Overcooked shrimp will curl up tightly, almost into a full circle and will take on the consistency of a pencil eraser. Properly cooked shrimp will be tender and resemble a slightly exaggerated capital “C”. For this reason, many recipes have you wait to add shrimp until 5-10 minutes before the other ingredients are done to avoid overcooking. Also, be aware that small shrimp will cook much more quickly than large ones, so ideally one should cook with shrimp of a uniform size.

Boiled Shrimp

Shrimp should only be boiled in the shell, heads on or off as desired, because the shell adds much flavor to the shrimp and the surrounding liquid. Here’s where most people go wrong . . . shrimp should be started in cold tap water with the desired herbs and spices. Do not allow the water to heat past 165-170 degrees. At that temperature remove the pot from heat, add sliced lemons or other citrus as desired, and allow the shrimp to cook for 5-10 minutes before chilling them in ice water to prevent over cooking. Starting with room temperature water allows the shrimp to soak up the flavors of the seasonings from the water better than if they were dropped directly into water at a full boil. When dropped into boiling water, proteins in the shrimp contract tightly and prevent any seasonings other than salt from penetrating into the shrimp’s body.

Fried shrimp

This one is mostly a no-brainer. Simply heat cooking oil to 350-375 degrees and drop in the shrimp for 1-3 minutes depending on size. Where people mostly go wrong is letting the cooking oil either not heat up enough before dropping in the shrimp or not allowing it to reheat to the proper temperature between batches of shrimp. An appropriate cooking thermometer is a big help — I use an infra-red thermometer that looks like a pistol and reads temperature within a few seconds.

Shrimp should be fried in an oil having a high smoke point (at least 400 degrees). Peanut oil is likely the best choice for most people, but other suitable oils include vegetable oil, grapeseed oil, avocado oil, or canola oil. The latter oil is inexpensive, but it has the tendency to go rancid in storage more quickly than the other oils. Cooking oil should not be thrown out after a single use. It should be filtered to remove particulates and stored in a dark place in a tightly capped container. I use a large plastic funnel with a wire mesh filter to strain my cooking oils.

Purchase or create at home the coating of your choice. Following the instructions for your particular coating, dredge the shrimp until coated and drop them in the fryer. Take care not to overload the fryer as that will cause the temperature of the oil to drop below 300 degrees, which will result in greasy shrimp. Remove the shrimp after 1-3 minutes and drain on a paper towel.

Marinading Shrimp for Grill or Sauté

Shrimp are often marinaded before grilling or sautéing. The USDA recommends marinading shrimp in the refrigerator for no more than 2 hours. However, shrimp should remain in acidic marinades containing citrus juice, such as lemon or lime, for no more than 30 minutes or the shrimp will become soft and mushy. A good marinade is a mixture of 2 tablespoons of olive oil, 1 tablespoon of lemon juice, 1 teaspoon garlic, 1 teaspoon kosher salt, 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning and, if a little heat is desired, 1/4-1/5 teaspoon cayenne pepper. Coat the shrimp in this mixture and refrigerate for no more than 30 minutes before cooking, then skewer and grill them, or drop them into a hot pan or griddle and sauté them, taking care not to overcook.

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A Cedar Key Redfish Trip

By Jeff Gartland

Living in the Big Bend area we have endless possibilities for fishing. GOFC gives annual prizes for ten species of fish, five offshore species and five inshore species. Fishing for each of these species requires somewhat different equipment, skillsets, and knowledge base. That's what makes fishing a lifelong passion for so many of us. There's always something new to learn and do.

This article describes a Cedar Key redfish trip Chic Hinton and I made in early October. It's a fairly typical redfish trip and covers fishing spots well known in the local fishing community.

We launched Chic's 21' Carolina skiff on a Monday, at a leisurely 9:00 AM. The saying is "Fish for trout on a rising tide, redfish on a falling tide". The idea being the falling tide flushes the bait and redfish out of the flooded, grassy fringes of the keys where they are difficult to target. We were definitely fishing a falling tide.

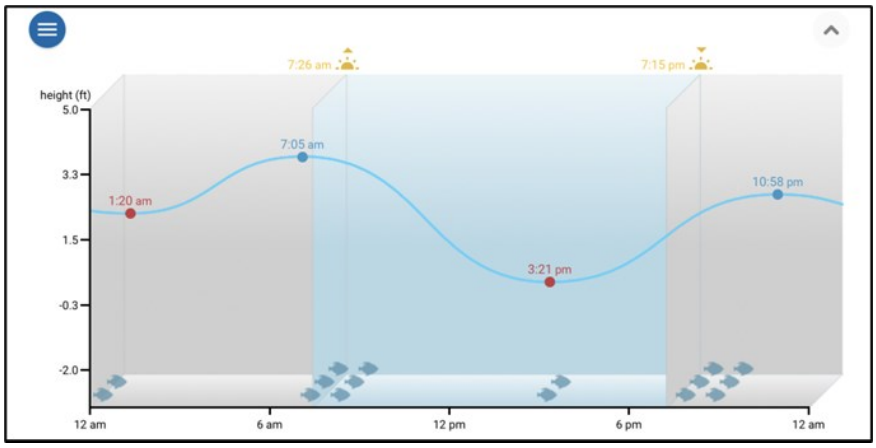
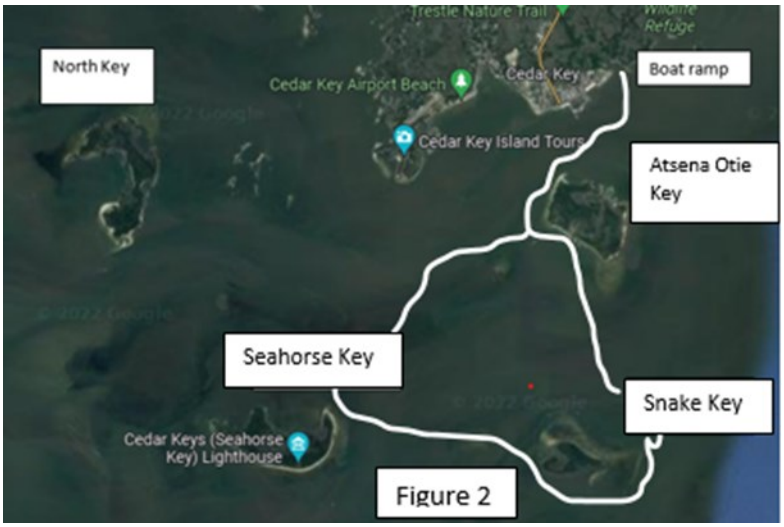


Figure 1. Tides for October 3, 2022 from Tides for Fishing

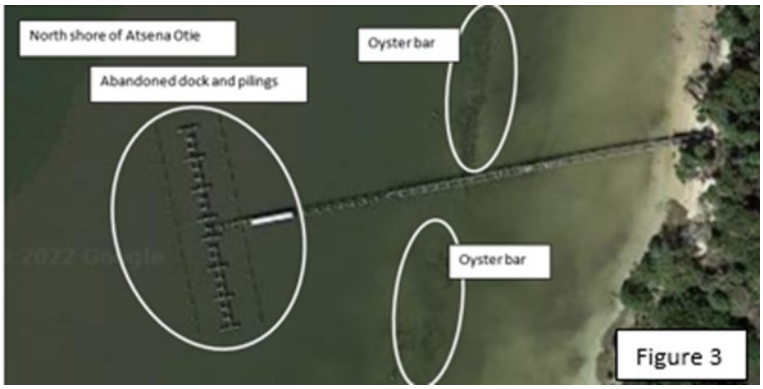
A few words of caution here. Cedar Key, and most of the Big Bend inshore, is very shallow. Be sure to plan your trips with this in mind to avoid bottoming out and having to wait for the incoming tide. Or worse, losing a bottom unit

Knowing that our target species was redfish, we had a good idea of where we wanted to be as the tide fell. Starting from the boat ramp we headed across the channel to Atsena Otie Key, then over to Snake Key and then Seahorse Key (figure 2).



At Atsena Otie, the abandoned pier on the north side (figure 3) is often the first stop. This area holds fish year round. In the winter you can catch sheepshead here, close in to the pilings. The rest of the year it holds both red and black drum. I've also caught some nice trout here on shrimp under a popping cork casting away from the pier to the flats.. On this day we passed by in search of bait.

There are several schools of thought on bait. Some folks are strictly artificial lures and will not allow bait onto their boat at all. Others are happy with the convenience of buying all their live and dead bait. While still others only want to use bait they can catch. I've always liked using live bait and now that I've learned to throw a castnet, I get a lot of pleasure from catching my own bait. Sure, it takes longer than buying it, but the idea is to be out on the water, enjoying the day and improving your skills. One of the easiest castnet methods I've seen, and the one I use now, is demonstrated in a 42 second video by our own Dale Reed, GOFC past-President and local guide. If you'd like a copy of the video, email me at newsletter@gofc.us.



Chic is one who almost exclusively uses bait he's caught, and I've learned to appreciate the bait

catching portion of the fishing trip by watching him. So, we drove past the abandoned pier and went around to the SW side of Atsena Otie to a small inlet that often holds bait (Figure 4).

The tide had started to move out and there was good water flow at the mouth of the inlet. This is usually a good spot to castnet for mullet and pinfish, two great redfish baits. But not today. We slowly moved further into the inlet and threw at the grass beds lining the shoreline. No luck.

Figure 4

Knowing that Chic had frozen mullet in the cooler from a previous trip, we decided to move on a few hundred yards and fish the shoreline. We baited our bottom rigs (see Figure 6 for different types) with cut mullet and tossed them up close to the shoreline. No luck, as we continually repositioned. Our final stop was the southmost point of Atsena. This is an area of good water movement during tide changes and frequently holds redfish. Maybe it did that day, but the fast moving water was full of floating grass and fouling our bottom rigs. We moved on.

A bit further south, and across a large flats, is Snake Key (Figure 5). There is a point on the east end of Snake that's one of my favorite places to fish. Again, on a tide change the water moves around the point carrying bait with it. There is a deep channel here where I've caught reds, trout, jacks, and sharks. It's a great fishing spot with a beautiful view of a nice beach and lush vegetation on the east side of Snake Key. But again, nothing was interested in our cut mullet bottom rigs, so we moved on.

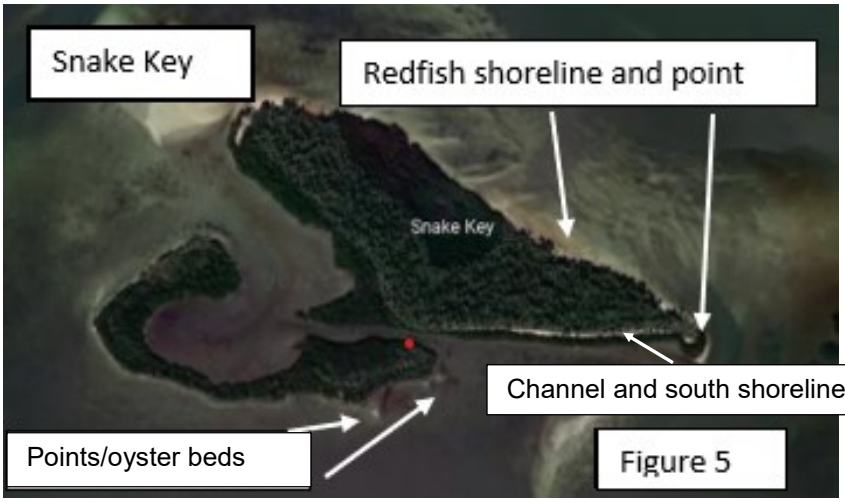


Figure 5

Next up was the long south shoreline of Snake Key. This area has a channel that bisects the key. To the east of the channel, the shore is lined with beautiful palm trees. Bait moves through the channel and the reds follow. West of the inlet are grassy points with oysters. Excellent redfish habitat. We fished cut mullet on the bottom, Gulps under a popping cork and threw weedless gold spoons up against the oyster reefs but again, nothing doing. Time to move on to Seahorse Key.

Seahorse Key is about a two mile run due west of Snake Key (Figure 6). Typically, we fish the west shoreline of Seahorse. At this point we decided we really needed some live bait, so we headed around the north end of Seahorse Key to a bait spot on the west side. On the way we saw several birds circling and diving off the NE shore. We pulled up and started throwing the castnet. We brought in large mullet and good numbers of pinfish. Pinfish are an excellent redfish bait. Chic says they're the best bait and I agree.

Figure 6

We finally had good live redfish bait. Rather than drive around to the back side of Seahorse Key at low tide we decided to go back to Atsena Otie to finish the afternoon. We pulled up and anchored at the split in the oyster bars shown in Figure 4. Much of it was exposed by the low tide. We put on the live pinfish and cast out. I freelined a pinfish into the gap between the two oyster bars and it wasn't long before I landed a 20" redfish. We had our first red in the live well .

Another boat pulled around after seeing this. Between the two boats we fished on both sides of the oyster bar channel for another 30 minutes with no more bites.

Once again it was time to move. We went the short distance back to the abandoned Atsena Otie pier (Figure 3). We fished the pier pilings and nearby oyster bars. Soon, Chic's pinfish rig had a 22" red on it. Another fish in the live well. We had set an arbitrary 5:00 PM stop time. Just as we decided to wrap it up for the day, Chic had another redfish on. This one a solid 25", the biggest yet. Now we were out of pinfish and had three reds to pick our limit from. We decided to call it a day.

One thing I especially like about an inshore trip like this is that you can be fishing (or cast netting) within about 5 minutes of launching. No long rides offshore. This was certainly not a hard trip, nor was it the most exciting trip I've been on with Chic. But it was a relaxing, fun day on the water and sometimes that's the best of all.

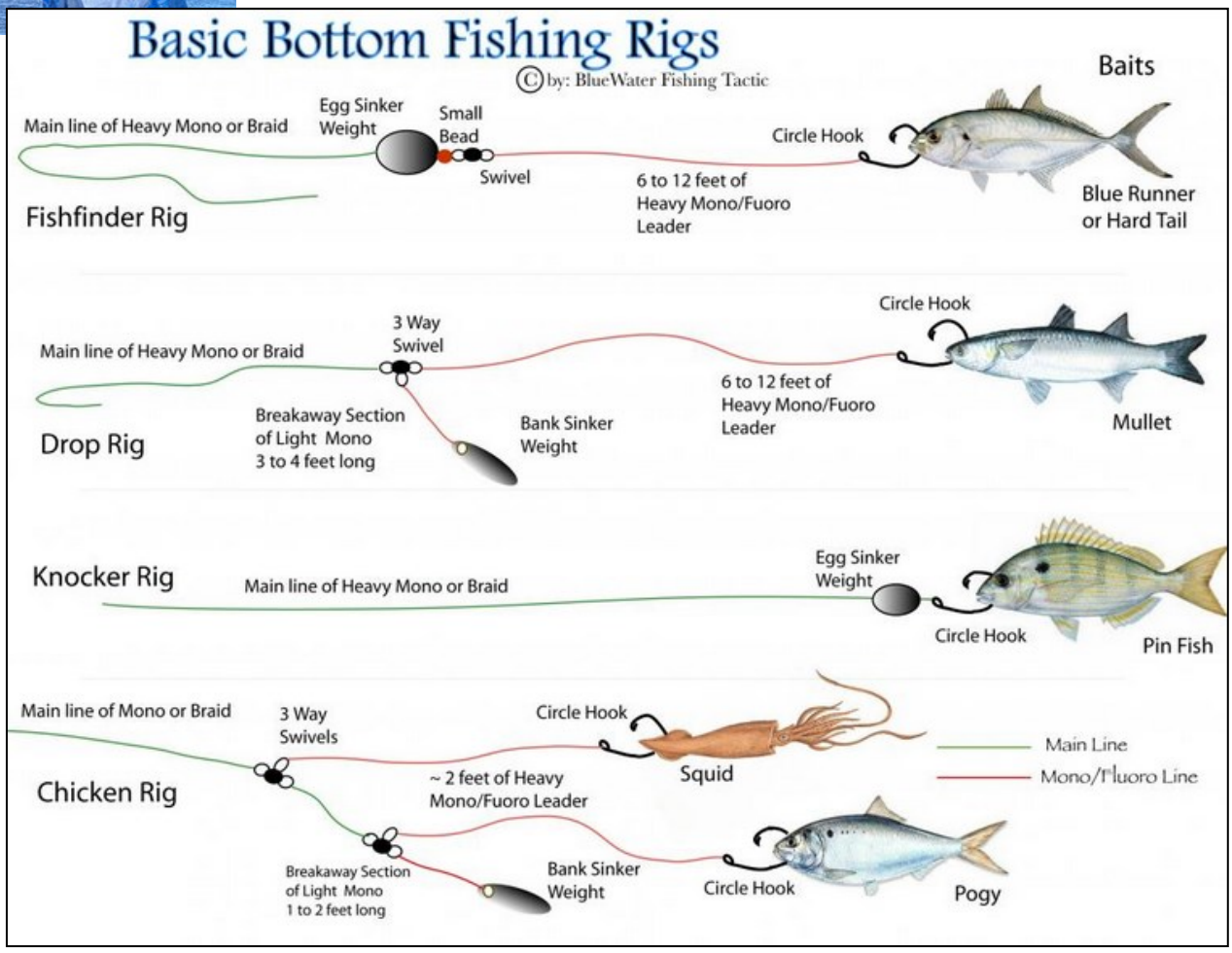


Figure 6 Basic Bottom Fishing Rigs (courtesy of Florida Sportsman)

Edward C. Ellett, CPCU, CIC, CLU
King Insurance
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Gainesville, FL 32606
352-415-8244
352-415-8244 fax
EEllett@King-Insurance.com

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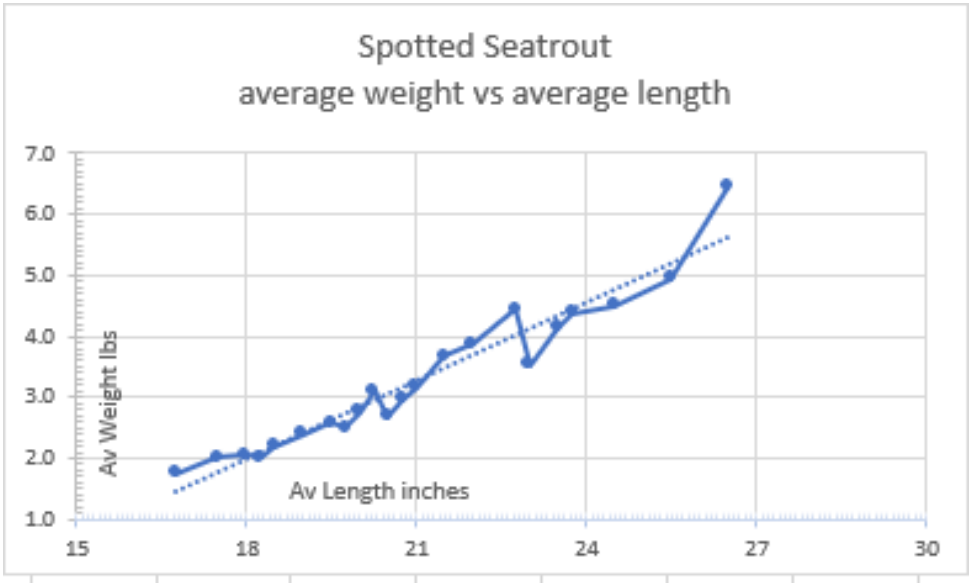
October 25, 2022 General Meeting

Dave Ferrell—Florida Insider Fishing Report television program

Another amazing presentation by Dave Ferrell of Florida insider fishing report television show. Dave has fished all over the world and brought a few stories and techniques to share with our club. We are very grateful he was able to be with us today. Our fall tournament was October 22. Ed Ellett took first place, and Dale Reed and Mike Dumas tied for second.

Length (inches)	Weight (lbs)
16.75	1.75
17.5	2
18	1.94
18	2
18	2.19
18.25	2
18.5	2.19
19	2.25
19	2.44
19	2.5
19.5	2.38
19.5	2.44
19.5	2.53
19.5	2.59
19.5	2.63
19.5	2.81
19.75	2.5
20	2.56
20	2.63
20	2.81
20	2.88
20	2.88
20.25	3.06
20.25	3.13
20.5	2.5
20.5	2.75
20.5	2.75
20.75	2.81
20.75	2.94
20.75	3
20.75	3.13
21	3.06
21	3.19
21	3.25
21.5	3.5
21.5	3.81
22	3.88
22.75	4.44
23	2.38
23	3.75
23	4.38
23.5	4.13
23.75	4.38
24.5	4.5
24.5	4.94
26.5	6.44



Av length	Av weight
16.75	1.75
17.5	2
18	2.04
18.25	2
18.5	2.19
19	2.4
19.5	2.57
19.75	2.5
20	2.75
20.25	3.1
20.5	2.67
20.75	2.97
21	3.17
21.5	3.66
22	3.88
22.75	4.44
23	3.52
23.5	4.13
23.75	4.38
24.5	4.5
25.5	4.94
26.5	6.44

Here's an interesting data set originally collected and compiled by John Patrick and Richard Bowles.

Shown are the length-weight relationships of spotted seatrout. 48 total fish caught along the west coast of Florida from Crystal River to Suwannee. All weights are from certified scales. Average weights are plotted against average length.

Know how long the trout is but not how heavy? This is a good best guess.

Understanding the Ellett Contest

With credit to Brian Kiel

Understanding the John Ellett Contest

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: Men's, Women's and Elite. A simplified formula awards points on a relative basis based on the heaviest fish of each species, with the exception of amberjack and kingfish which are based on length. 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 in the club's Acute Angler newsletter, magazine, and on the GOFC website (Ellett standings).

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. Any scale can be used to estimate the fish weight, however, when a fish exceeds the maximum weight for a particular species (see bottom of weigh slip under Heavy 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. 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, weighslip@gofc.us).

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 (2 pts.) and Funaments (1 pt.). Writing an article for the Acute Angler is worth 3 points.

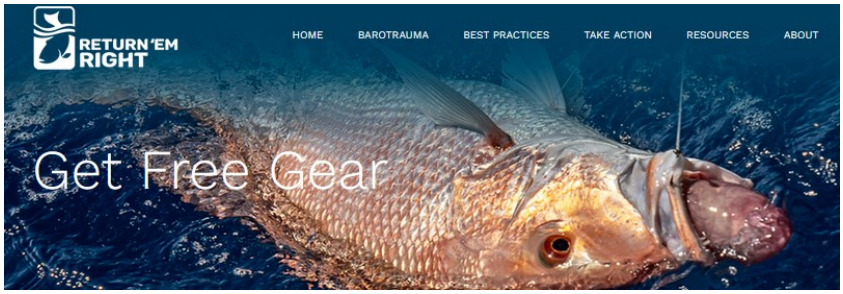
Awards are given to three places with the top male & female angler receiving a coveted inscribed pewter plate from the Ellett family, who happen to have sponsored this contest since its inception. The Ellett contest dates run from January 1st to December 31st with awards given out during the March Awards 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 Category

GAINESVILLE OFFSHORE FISHING CLUB

Items of Interest—Free Descending Device

"Return' Em Right" offers free descending devices



Most of us have reeled up a fish from depth with the stomach forced outside by an expanding bladder. We have also experienced the heartache of watching it float away on surface unable to dive after being released because it is undersize or out of season.

It's now a legal requirement (the DESCEND act) for anyone bottom fishing in the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico to have a venting tool or descending device.

To educate anglers in responsible release practices the Return "Em Right program was started. Anglers can register for a 15 minute online review of best practices. Upon completion Return 'Em Right will send free of charge a kit with two descending devices, lead and all the tools you'll need. This is a $100 value and the right thing for anglers to do.

Ellett Contest Recent Catches
New Entries from October 15 —November 11, 2022

Angler	Species	Weight or length	Date caught	Location	Bait or Lure
Ed Ellett	King Mackeral	42.5"	10/31/2022	Cedar Key	Live bait
Ken Knopf	King Mackeral	43.25 "	10/30/2022	Cedar Key	Threadfin
Debby Knopf	King Mackeral	47.5"	10/30/2022	Cedar Key	Threadfin
Chic Hinton	Grouper - Gag	11.31 lbs	10/30/2022	CK	Stretch 25
Tom Jaworski	Greater Amberjack	38"	10/30/2022	CK	Pin fish
Chic Hinton	Greater Amberjack	39.75"	10/30/2022	CK	Pin fish
Tim Pedersen	Bluefish	3.968 lbs	11/6/2022	Keaton beach	Lure
Dale Reed	Grouper - Gag	11.02 lbs	10/22/2022	Ck	Live
Jeff Gartland	Grouper - Gag	9.03 lbs	11/2/2022	Cedar Key	Stretch 30

Ellett Contest Standings as of 09/15/2022

Men's

GOFC member	Amberjack	points	Bluefish	points	Cobia	points	Flounder	points	Grouper	points	King Mack	points	Redfish	points	Sheepshead	points	Span Mack	points	Trout	points	Bonus	TOTALS
Pedersen, Tim	34.50	21.70	3.07	25.00	12.45	12.87	1.68	19.27	5.80	12.82	37.00	20.56	6.60	23.89	4.32	20.07	5.16	24.16	6.07	25.00	4	209.33
Ellett, Ed		0.00	3.28	20.65	24.10	25.00	1.76	20.18	9.61	21.24	42.50	23.61	6.40	22.86	5.38	25.00	4.54	21.25	2.04	12.10		191.90
Hinton, Chic	30.75	25.00	2.80	17.63		0.00		0.00	11.31	25.00	37.63	20.91	5.81	20.75	3.75	17.43	4.00	18.73	2.25	9.26	6	160.70
Vining, Carl		0.00	3.38	21.28	10.52	20.17	2.18	25.00		0.00	36.00	20.00	6.75	24.11	2.38	11.06	3.50	16.39	2.06	8.48	2	148.49
Jaworski, Tom	38.00	23.90	1.19	7.49		0.00	1.50	18.23	7.31	16.16		0.00	3.14	11.21	3.31	15.38	4.09	21.96	3.24	13.34	8	135.67
Horn, Phil		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	36.75	20.42	7.00	25.00	5.27	24.49	5.34	25.00	3.66	15.89	2	112.79
Reed, Dale		0.00	2.40	15.11		0.00		0.00	11.02	24.36		0.00	4.35	15.54	3.46	16.08	2.76	12.92	3.40	13.99	6	104.00
Jeff Gartland	34.00	21.38	1.20	7.56		0.00		0.00	9.03	19.96	45.00	25.00	3.04	14.07		0.00	2.30	10.77		0.00	2	100.74
DeGraff, Stephen		0.00	2.24	14.11		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	5.04	21.20	1.00	4.65	4.32	20.22	4.60	19.30	4	83.48
Byatt, John		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.00	22.94		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	4.40	18.11		41.05
Peacock, Jay		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	5.01	21.11		0.00		0.00	4.62	19.02		40.12
Pedersen, Ken		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	8.07	19.83		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		19.83
Mark Rustenier		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.82	13.20		0.00	2	15.20
Daniel Czyz		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.84	13.20		0.00		0.00	2	15.20
Kiel, Brian		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	3.22	15.07		0.00		15.07
Mike Wohl		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.09	9.71		0.00		0.00	4	13.71
Greco, Dominic		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	3.24	13.34		13.34
Matt Green		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	1.92	8.92		0.00		0.00	2	10.92
Mundt, William		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	1.94	7.98		7.98
Tristan Woodrome		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	1.68	7.81		0.00		0.00		7.81
Rustemier, Mark		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	1.50	6.17		6.17

Women's

GOFC member	Amberjack	points	Bluefish	points	Cobia	points	Flounder	points	Grouper	points	King Mack	points	Redfish	points	Sheepshead	points	Span Mack	points	Trout	points	Bonus	TOTALS
Sanders, Staci		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.13	25.00		0.00		0.00	6.13	25.00	3.00	25.00	2.00	25.00	1.80	14.38	2	116.38
Mundt, Mary		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.06	19.81	1.31	10.46	0	30.27
Cross, Dawn		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.74	22.83		0.00		0.00	0	28.83
Horn, Rhonda		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	3.13	25.00	0	25.00
Tavarez, Miriam		0.00	3.04	25.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	0	25.00
Stephanie Green		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.70	22.50		0.00		0.00	0	22.50
Charlotte Pedersen		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	2.43	20.25		0.00		0.00	2	22.25
Turner, Elaine		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	1.50	12.70	0	12.70

Elite

GOFC member	Amberjack	points	Bluefish	points	Cobia	points	Flounder	points	Grouper	points	King Mack	points	Redfish	points	Sheepshead	points	Span Mack	points	Trout	points	Bonus	TOTALS
Cooper, Virgil		0.00	2.28	25.00		0.00	3.67	25.00	11.81	25.00	35.25	18.55	7.01	22.30	5.96	25.00	3.27	19.46	6.62	25.00	4	189.31
Knopf, Ken	41.00	25.00	1.80	20.77		0.00	1.58	10.76	11.75	24.87	43.25	22.76	7.05	22.42	3.53	14.81	4.20	25.00	3.07	13.86	6	186.26
Knopf, Debby	38.00	23.17		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	47.5	25.00	7.86	25.00	3.65	16.15	3.73	22.20	2.13	8.04	6	125.57
Patrick, John		0.00	1.50	16.48		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	7.63	24.27		0.00		0.00		0.00		40.75
Ellett, Marcia		0.00		0.00		0.00	1.06	7.22		0.00		0.00	5.80	18.45		0.00	1.56	9.29	1.48	5.59		40.54
Turner, Allen		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	5.44	22.82		0.00		0.00		22.82
	41.00		2.28		0		3.67		11.81		47.5		7.86		5.96		4.2		6.62			

FWC News—Red Snapper and Greater Amberjack Seasons Announced

News

2022 Gulf Recreational Red Snapper

- Florida's 2022 recreational red snapper season will open June 17 and run consecutively through July 31.
- The season will reopen in the fall for the following weekends:
Oct. 8-9 (Sat. & Sun)
Oct. 15-16 (Sat. & Sun)
Oct. 22-23 (Sat. & Sun)
Nov. 11-13 (Fri., Sat. & Sun - Veterans Day weekend)
Nov. 25-27 (Fri., Sat. & Sun - Thanksgiving weekend)
- This season applys to recreational anglers fishing from private vessels in Florida Gulf state and federal waters. For-hire operations that do not have a federal reef fish permit may also participate in the season but are limited to fishing for red snapper in Florida Gulf state waters only.
- Florida was required to reduced the 2022 quota by 13% to payback 2021 overages. The current 2022 quota is 1,167,163 lbs.

2022 Gulf Gag Grouper

	Recreational		Commercial
Season	Open June 1 – December 31. If landings reach the recreational ACL, harvest will be prohibited for the remainder of the fishing year.	Season	Gag grouper is managed under an individual fishing quota (IFQ) program. Anyone commercially fishing for gag grouper must possess allocation and follow established protocols.
Minimum Size Limit	24 inches total length	Minimum Size Limit	24 inches total length
Bag Limit	2 per person within the 4 grouper aggregate bag limit which includes gag, red grouper, black grouper, scamp, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, yellowedge grouper, snowy grouper, speckled hind, and warsaw grouper. No grouper may be retained by the captain or crew of a vessel operating as a charter vessel or headboat.	Trip Limit	none
Permit	State issued recreational license/angler registry, federal angler registry or Federal charter/headboat permit for reef fish	Permit	Commercial vessel permit for reef fish is required. Additionally, an eastern Gulf reef fish bottom longline endorsement required to use bottom longline for Gulf reef fish in the federal waters east of 85°30′ longitude.
	Non-stainless steel circle hooks are required		Non-stainless steel circle hooks are required when fishing with natural

CLOSED

Greater Amberjack Season Opening May 1-May 31, Aug 1—Oct 31

Greater Amberjack | Lesser Amberjack and Banded Rudderfish

Gulf

State and federal waters:

- Minimum Size Limit: 34" Fork Length
- Daily Bag Limit: 1 per person
- Season: Open May 1-31 and Aug. 1-Oct. 31.

Atlantic

State waters:

- Minimum Size Limit: 28" Fork Length
- Daily Bag Limit: 1 per person
- Season: Open year-round

Special regulations apply for this species when fishing in Biscayne National Park.

In the Atlantic reef fish fishery, gear rules[2] require dehooking tools, and *as of Jan. 1, 2021*, non-stainless steel hooks in all state waters, and non-offset circle hooks N. of 28 ° N. latitude.

Federal waters:

- Minimum size limit: 28" FL
- Daily Bag Limit: 1 per person

There has been a change to the GOFC official rules relating to King Mackerel (Kingfish)

To all GOFC Members. Please be aware of the following changes:

These changes were made and approved in January's GOFC Board meeting on 1/11/2022.

Change #1 = GOFC Webpage - https://gofc.us/rules/

Last bullet item in the section titled - *"Fish Entry Conditions" Now states:*

"Amberjack **and King Mackerel** can be entered all year long regardless of closed seasons with the requirement that they be released unharmed if caught during a closed season. Amberjack **and King Mackerel** will be entered and scored based on overall length measured from the tip of the jaw or tip of the snout with closed mouth to the center of the fork in the tail. **Entries must include a photo with the complete length of the fish**. Amberjack **and King Mackerel** can still be entered by weight for club record purposes as long as the fish was caught during an open season."

Change #2 = GOFC Webpage - https://gofc.us/about-tournaments-and-contests/

Sections 3 and 5

First bullet item in section 3 titled - ***"Ellett Angler of the Year (Official Contest Weigh Slip)" Now states:***

• A year-long contest in which points are awarded (based on weight) for bluefish, cobia, flounder, grouper, redfish, sheepshead, spanish mackerel, trout and (by length) for amberjack and king mackerel

First bullet item in section 5 titled - ***"Top Offshore Angler of the Year (Official Weigh Slip)" Now states:***

• A year-long contest in which points are awarded (by weight) for cobia, grouper, spanish mackerel and (by length) for amberjack and king mackerel