The Acute Angler

December, 2023
Volume 56, Number 12

The monthly newsletter of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club

December Hot Shot

Heading to the water...

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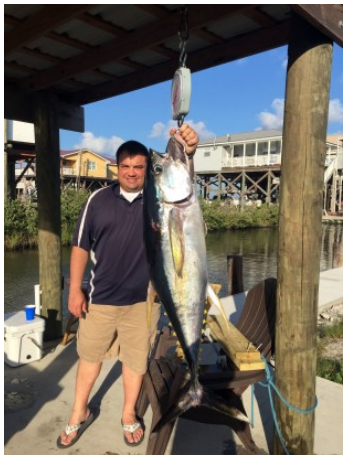

GOFC's annual Redfish and Trout tournament was held on Saturday, December 9th in Steinhatchee and was a great success. Congratulations to Chic Hinton on catching a leviathan seatrout! He sure picked the right day to catch his biggest trout ever! The weather was beautiful, and we had a great turnout. Thank you to the Steinhatchee Marina at Deadman's Bay for hosting us!

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to serve as club President this year. We had a lot of fun and made a lot of great memories this year both on and off the water. I'd like to thank the club's officers and Board of Directors for all of their hard work and support, I'm thankful for the club's fabulous sponsors whose financial support helps make it possible for us to hold such great events each year, and most of all I'm thankful for all our members who's participation and camaraderie and enthusiasm make it all worthwhile.

Wrapping up my term as President would be more bittersweet if I weren't so excited about the officers and board who will be taking the helm for next year. I know that Al Clements (President Elect) and John Ebbs (Vice President Elect) have already demonstrated tireless dedication to club while serving on the Board, they have a lot of great ideas in mind for next year, and I know that they will be bringing a ton of energy and enthusiasm to their new roles. I wholeheartedly believe that 2024 is going to be the Club's best year ever!

I hope everyone's holidays are safe, happy, and healthy. I can't wait to see you all again in January!

Your 2023 GOFC President,

Ryan Kremser

From the Editor

As 2023 draws to a close we must certainly give Ryan our departing president a huge shout out for the work and effort put into leading our club this past year. We certainly are in a better place due to his leadership as we continue to climb out of COVID and the impact it had on clubs like ours. Thanks Ryan, glad to know you are not going too far and will be leading the effort in updating and improving our website in 2024!

We also are sort of saying goodbye to the monthly articles from Dr. Mark Rustemier on Medical Pearls. Each month's addition brought us invaluable medical advice and common-sense recommendations. While we will miss them, Mark will continue to provide content to the newsletter on varies topics as the mood strikes him and we look forward to that! Thanks Mark!

The club is kicking off 2024 with our yearly oyster roast get together on Saturday the 13th of January. Please look for details later in the newsletter. Very much looking forward to the wonderful food and fellowship. As a treat we are starting a bit earlier than in past years so we might see one of the amazing sunsets that Tim and Linda have at their place.

Our January meeting will have it's traditional Ellett Award contest review and our master anglers panel for Q&A and tips and tricks to catch all 10 of our contest species. Come prepared to ask questions about our inshore, near shore, and offshore species, seasons, tactics, etc. Just don't expect GPS numbers!

It should be no surprise if an angler catches all 10 species they will be on the short list for the overall award at the end of the year!

Our 2024 president Al Clements and I are looking forward to a great year but we need your participation, support, and enthusiasm! Attend our meetings and special events, fish the tournaments, take great pictures to share on the website and maybe even write an article or two for this newsletter!

See you on the water, tight lines and following seas to all.

John Ebbs

2024 GOFC Vice President & Newsletter Editor

Upcoming Events

Oyster Roast - Saturday , 01/13/2024 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm

January Meeting - Tuesday, 01/23/2024 - 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Awards Banquet - TBA

February Meeting - Tuesday, 02/27/2024 -7:00 pm - 9:00pm

March Meeting - Tuesday, 03/26/2024 - 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

All Tournament and socials dates for the year will be announced in the coming months!

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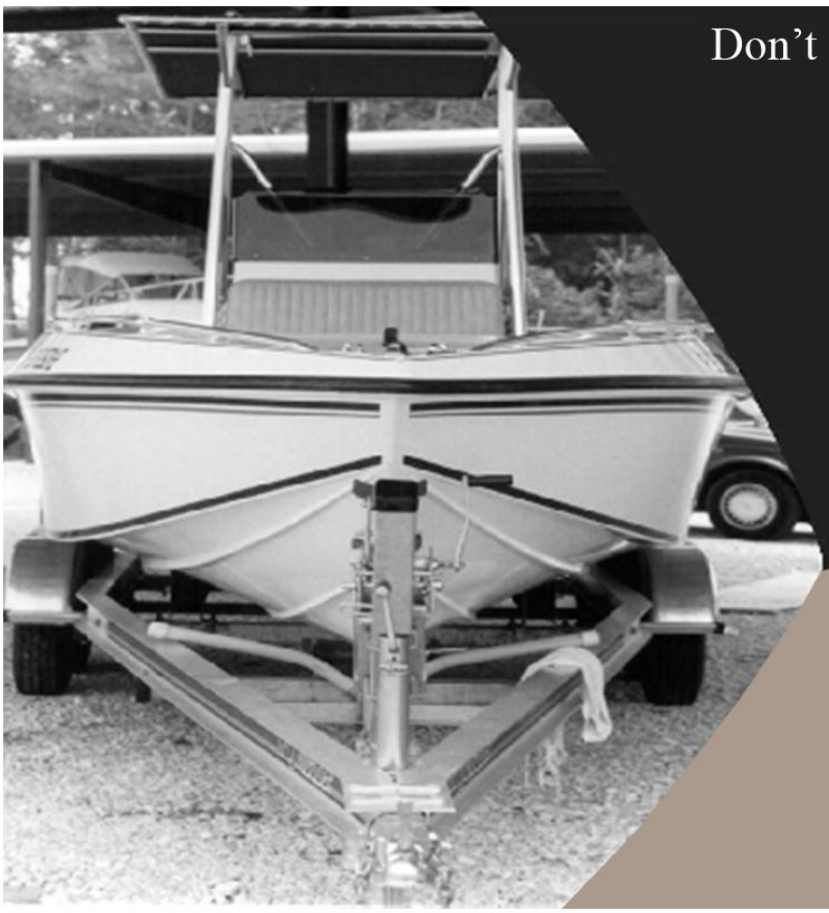

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Captain's Log

By Joe Richard

Time for Winter Trailer Maintenance

Friends will confirm that I'm more careful with boat trailer maintenance than back in our youthful heyday, when we towed small boats up and down the Interstate on many long summer trips, usually in Key West. We had few worries in those days; there were few boats and no fish limits. Much less, hordes of cruise ship tourists. Even hurricanes were scarce, happening only every 10 years or so. In preparation for these much-anticipated road trips, we'd splurge and buy brand new trailer lights, the kind with holes in them to drain water. Install them on the single axle Dilly trailer before getting on the road. Not even a spare tire, much less checking the bearings or leaf springs.

The water was so salty in Key West that it burned the blisters on our toes that were rubbed raw from snorkeling without booties. At the end of each day, we'd carwash the boat, costing a quarter, but never thought about rinsing the trailer. Our trailer lights may have still worked on the trip home several weeks later, or maybe not.

These memories surfaced recently when the GOFC invited Cliff Braddock from B&S Trailers to give a presentation on proper trailer maintenance. It left many of us thinking (or worrying) about the current state of our own boat trailers. When asked to identify the most frequent problems encountered during Cliff's 40 years in business, it was a reminder to prioritize trailer maintenance between fishing trips. Or at least, annual trailer care and repair during the winter off-season. Cliff had lots of good advice, listed further below.

That same night, I mentioned to GOFC member Chic that I needed to switch out my leaf springs. After only three years, they resembled artifacts from a Spanish galleon. He showed up next morning, barely after coffee time.

"What, today? My boat's still on the trailer."

"I'll lift it off with my tractor. Follow me to the house."

Chic's big red tractor slid the boat right off my galvanized trailer. The trailer was then lifted on its side. In a short time, it had new leaf springs from Texas Trailer here in Gainesville. This time the leaf springs were coated with axle grease. The axle itself was carried to Chic's barn and gently ground for light rust on its bottom. (A can of galvanized spray was applied the following day at Newnan's Lake, after launching the boat). We also added new grease to the bearings and with a block of wood and hammer, tapped on new Buddy Bearings. Bingo, ready for a road trip. Well, it's a simple job when you own a small boat. And have access to a big red tractor. Maintaining bigger trailers for offshore boats would certainly take more time. More extensive repairs can be made at B&S Trailer or at Texas Trailer.

Some notes from Cliff's talk at a recent club meeting:

>His first advice was to *always* rinse that galvanized trailer in fresh water after each trip to the coast. Backing it into a freshwater lake or the Suwannee River certainly helps, as it submerges the entire trailer, although he pointed out that even rivers carry some salt content. And counting on brackish water for a rinse is pretty much a joke. A car wash certainly helps, and don't spare the quarters. If that's not available, he said some guys run a yard sprinkler under their trailer when back at the house. Other guys actually worry about their trailer rusting while they're out fishing. So, they carry a spray gun and water tank in their truck to rinse the trailer *immediately* after launching the boat. Not sure how that works out on crowded Saturdays at the ramp, when any small delay may attract comments and maybe worse.

>Cheap tires (thin tread) and improper tire pressure are the number one causes for boat trailer breakdowns. The thicker the tire's tread, the better. And having the correct tire air pressure is crucial. Boat tires are designed for much higher pressure than cars.

So, if your tire is designed to hold 60 or 70 pounds of pressure, follow instructions. You don't want to drag that boat around with a measly 30-35 pounds of tire pressure. Like we did to Key West.

>Also strongly recommended: carry a spare tire with proper pressure *and* an extra wheel hub with bearings inside, sealed in a plastic bag where dust or sand won't get inside. (I was told five years ago by a dealership in Perry, to get rid of those rubber grease caps and tap on new Buddy Bearings.) Bring extra grease. If bearings give out on the highway, a hub can be switched out quickly. If it happens, do yourself a favor and let those bearings squeal a little longer while getting away from passing traffic, and pull onto a side road or gas station. Ideally, a grease gun should be applied to tire bearings once a month.

>In general, tandem axles are better than singles. If a tire blows, you can limp along on three tires. I did that once when a defective wheel took flight, and we limped that 25-foot Mako home. Tandems definitely require more upkeep, including hydraulic brakes, but they are less likely to leave you on the side of the road. Cliff says pick either an aluminum or galvanized trailer; he isn't impressed with hybrids that combine both.

>Like tire tread, don't skimp on waterproof lights. You want those puppies working year after year. They might prevent a wreck on the highway, or an expensive stop from the highway patrol. (I was pulled over last year near Trenton when my new waterproof lights unaccountably weren't working. When I got out and jiggled the connection, they came on. The cop sighed and walked away. The problem was those common, four-way trailer light plugs can dry out or capture dirt. They need to be cleaned every couple of months, and grease added that conducts electricity (sold in tiny packets at the nearest auto store; the same stuff is used for battery connections).

> Always carry a small toolbox with everything needed for trailer maintenance or repair: tools, grease, extra bearing caps—everything a boat trailer could want.

As a result, I've made an early New Year's resolution to raise the bar on my trailer maintenance regimen. And winter is the perfect time to do so. Pick a sunny weekend and where possible, launch the boat at a nearby location. Getting the boat off the trailer makes inspection much easier, allowing one to climb inside the entire structure, peering from every angle. After a careful inspection, one can buy and switch out parts that need repair or adjustment. Or you could leave the whole rig at a repair shop where they can hoist the boat out of the way for repairs.

I keep my boat in the back yard, so it's easier to monitor things. Quite different from storing the boat on the coast, where it can rust for *months* without being seen. And as we all know, rust never sleeps. At the very least, I peer around under my trailer and spray Ospho on visible rust.

What a life we live, launching in salty, corrosive water year after year. Countless people up north won't even *think* about dunking their boats in saltwater. To say they're missing out on coastal fishing action would be an understatement. Maybe it's for the best; coastal boat ramps are crowded enough these days. With a galvanized trailer, I don't mind sacrificing a pair of leaf springs every three years, which is their average lifespan in the salt. Hard to imagine a trailer lasting too many years.

However, I recently saw the exact model of bass boat we once pulled to Key West, a 1971 Glastron Beaujack. With the original motor. Recently moved from Wisconsin to Cedar Key. That trailer could still roll, though it was painted white and pock-marked with countless rust holes. A 50-year-old boat trailer. I thought: *good luck, backing that trailer into saltwater for the first time. The frame may collapse within days.*

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Charlie's Kitchen
By Charlie Courtney

Shrimp Deviled Eggs

Copied from the Internet with some edits by Charlie Courtney

I ran across this recipe posted by Lori Yates on fox-eslovelemons.com quite by accident, but I feel that this is a great (and different) appetizer to serve at Christmas and New Year's holiday parties. (Note that any use of the word "I" occurring after this paragraph is Lori's.)

Shrimp Deviled Eggs is a decadent but easy twist on a classic. With just mayo, mustard, Old Bay seasoning and shrimp, hard boiled eggs are transformed into a perfect finger food.

Ingredients

Shrimp: 1/3 pound 50/60 tail-off peeled and deveined raw shrimp (about 18 shrimp).

After some trial and error, I found that 50/60 size shrimp (meaning there are 50 to 60 shrimp in 1 pound) were the perfect size for shrimp deviled eggs. Salad shrimp, like I use in seafood pasta salad were too small to make the dramatic garnish I envisioned, and anything bigger was, well, too big for a garnish! So, if you are able to find 50/60, peeled, deveined, tail-off shrimp at your store, they are PERFECT for these deviled eggs with shrimp recipe! One third pound of 50/60 shrimp will give you a shrimp to garnish each of the 12 deviled eggs, and then a handful (about 6) more shrimp to chop up and put in the filling. If you can't find 50/60 shrimp, don't worry. You can use a larger size shrimp for seafood deviled eggs, but I would recommend cutting them into bite-sized chunks for the garnish (use what's left for the filling). It won't be quite as pretty as whole shrimp perched on top, but it will taste just as delicious.

Olive Oil: 1 tablespoon

Use for roasting the shrimp for these deviled eggs with shrimp.

Old Bay seasoning: 1-1/2 teaspoons

The most delicious seasoning for the shrimp!

Hard boiled eggs: SIX PEELED, halved, whites and yolks separated

You will need 6 hard-boiled eggs to make 12 deviled eggs. I simply place the hard-boiled egg yolks in a shallow bowl and use a fork to mash them. However, don't rush this step. It takes a good 4 to 5 minutes of mashing to get the egg yolks pulverized into a very fine powder. You really don't want big chunks of yolk in your deviled eggs with shrimp filling.

Mayonnaise: 1/4 cup

Hellman's or Dukes, your preference

Dijon Mustard 2 teaspoons

I like the classic smooth (not grainy) kind for deviled eggs.

Salt and pepper: 1/8 teaspoon each

Season with these to your taste

Chives and/or dill: 2 tablespoons chopped fresh

I love to sprinkle shrimp deviled eggs with fresh herbs to garnish. You can choose either chives or dill; you don't need to use both unless you want to.

Instructions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Cooking the shrimp for shrimp deviled eggs couldn't be easier. Place the shrimp on a rimmed baking pan and drizzle them with olive oil, sprinkle them with Old Bay seasoning, and then toss everything together until the shrimp are evenly coated in oil and seasoning. Spread the shrimp into an even layer on the pan and pop them into a 400-degree oven to roast. It should only take 4 to 5 minutes until they are opaque throughout and fully cooked (145 degrees F internally). Set aside 12 shrimp for garnish; very finely chop remaining shrimp.

Place egg yolks in small bowl and use fork to crush until no large chunks remain. Add mayonnaise, mustard, salt, pepper and chopped shrimp; stir with fork until well combined.

Charlie's Kitchen (cont.)

Filling can be made up to 1 day in advance. Cover and refrigerate filling, egg white halves and garnish shrimp until ready to serve.

Just before serving, use small spoon or piping bag to divide filling between egg white halves. Garnish each egg with a whole shrimp. Sprinkle with chives and/or dill and serve immediately.

Other ways to make seafood deviled eggs:

Shrimp is not the only seafood that makes a great addition to deviled eggs! There are a variety of ways you can make seafood deviled eggs.

Jumbo lump crab meat could be used in place of the shrimp. You'd also use 1/3 pound of meat for this. Reserve 12 large chunks of crab as garnish and use the rest of the crab meat in the filling mixture. I do not recommend imitation crab meat here. It's great on crab Rangoon pizza, but spring for real crab meat if you're making deviled eggs with crab.

I also love smoked salmon for things way beyond my smoked salmon platter. Because smoked salmon is so salty, you don't need as much if you're going to use it for deviled eggs. 1/4 pound (4 ounces) or even less smoked salmon is plenty to have some to garnish each egg with, and some to include in the filling. Any extra smoked salmon can be used to make smoked salmon crostini.

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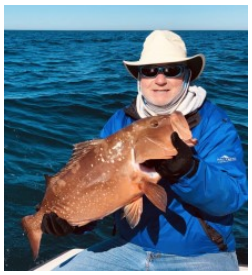
Marine Medicine Pearls



By Mark Rustemier M.D.

2023 PEARLS IN REVIEW

Thanks to those that have been reading these articles all along…this is a quick review. For those that haven't here is your cheat sheet.

Some of these pearls have already been applied this year. A GOFC member (who will remain nameless) used his new bolt cutter and first aid kit to remove a hook from his wife's finger and saved the fishing day. Well done. To avoid that "what did that article say again" moment in the future and bypass an expensive urgent care visit, consider printing an article or two and keeping them on board.

During my review of prior articles for this final Marine Medicine article, I enjoyed going back through the whole year and rereading some of the other articles especially some of Charlies Kitchen. I recommend you do the same.

Here are the monthly short versions but go back to that month's article for the details.

January PEARL; Keep **a pair of small bolt cutters in the boat.**

When a hook barb has pushed thru the skin sometimes only a bolt cutter will save the day.

February PEARL; Plan your skin cancer prevention, topical "PEEL" treatment for the winter months.

Get your dermatology evaluation and precancerous skin treatment in the winter so the cryotherapy or topical treatment is more comfortable and exposed less to the sun.

March PEARL: Shuffle your feet or bring the heat.

Initial treatment of a stingray sting is primarily hot water for 30-90 minutes, which denatures the venom and relieves pain.

April PEARL; On the Water Fishhook Removal

When a hook catches a fisherman, use the "hook cut" method if the barb has pushed thru the skin and the "string yank" method if it has not and no vital structures are involved.

May PEARL; Plan for sea sickness BEFORE leaving the dock.

Stay hydrated, get adequate sleep before the trip, avoid excessive alcohol or caffeine and plan for OTC medications or a prescription Transderm Scopolamine patch for those known to have motion sickness.

June PEARL; Don't Procrastinate; Prepare Your Boating First Aid Kit Now

Suggest getting a basic first aid kit at a pharmacy, then add a bottle of sterile saline (contact lens solution bottle works well) and small bolt cutters for pushed through hook removal.

July PEARL; Treat jellyfish stings with a saltwater rinse then topical vinegar

Rinse the area with salt water, NOT FRESH; then soak in vinegar or rubbing alcohol for 30 minutes or until pain resolves, then remove tentacles with tweezers or gloves.

August PEARL: Understanding ciguatera fish poisoning is key to prevention

Ciguatera is a toxin uncommon to Florida coastal waters, but the CDC still recommends people avoid eating barracuda. The toxin originates in algae and is not destroyed by cooking or freezing.

September PEARL; Stay hydrated during summer fishing in Florida.

Plenty of water, dilute sports drinks, proper clothing, limit caffeine/alcohol, provide shade on the boat, start hydrating before you feel thirsty and yes watch your urine.

October PEARL: Stop the bleeding.

When a laceration occurs; apply dressing to the wound with direct pressure until the bleeding stops. If bleeding persists in an extremity, apply a tourniquet until the bleeding stops and leave it on until medical personnel assess and remove it.

November PEARL: **Do not hyperventilate before diving underwater**

Whether swimming in a pool or ocean, to avoid Shallow Water Blackout, never hyperventilate before diving. Breath normally, then one deep breath before diving can avoid passing out underwater.

Thanks again for spending the time to read this years Marine Medicine articles. I plan to move on from a monthly column to other episodic topics in 2024.

Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays and safe fishing.

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.

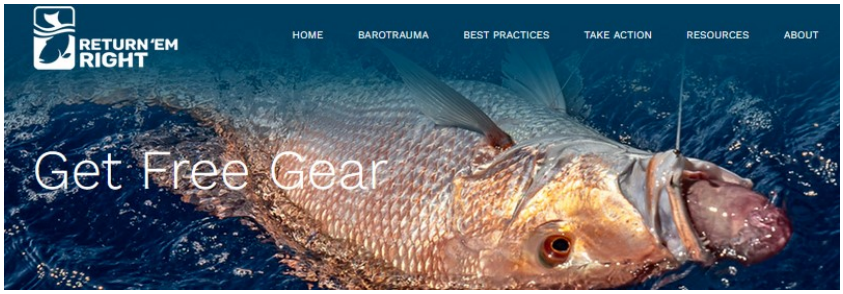
Awards are given to three places with the top male & female angler receiving a coveted inscribed pewter plate from the Ellett family, who happen to have sponsored this contest since its inception. The Ellett contest dates run from January 1st to December 31st with awards given out during the March Awards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

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.

Recent message from the FWC:

Dear Florida Reef Angler,
Thank you for your participation in Florida's recreational fishing data collection program by signing up for the State Reef Fish Survey. With the summer fishing season in full swing, we wanted to remind you about a recent rule change that took effect on April 1, 2023. **This rule change requires anglers to have a venting tool or descending device rigged and ready for use when targeting reef fish from a vessel, including catch and release, in state waters.** State waters extend from shore to 3 nautical miles on the Atlantic coast and from shore to 9 nautical miles on the Gulf coast. In state waters, reef fish species include groupers, snappers, amberjacks, gray triggerfish, red porgy, sea bass, hogfish and tilefish.
The goal of this rule is to help increase the survivability of reef fish species that commonly experience, **barotrauma;** a pressure related injury. The signs of these injuries include the stomach protruding out of the mouth, bulging eyes, bloated belly, distended intestines and inability to swim down independently.
If you will be targeting these species from a vessel, please remember to have either a descending device or venting tool rigged and ready to go. As a friendly reminder, **these tools are also required in adjacent federal waters when fishing for reef fish**. In the Gulf, a descending device or venting tool must be rigged and ready to use on board a vessel. In the Atlantic, a descending device must be on board and readily available.
We hope that you find this information useful as you prepare for your time on the water.
For more information about this rule change and other required reef fish gear you can visit MyFWC.com/ReefFishGear. Please feel free to reach out to us at Marine@MyFWC.com if you have any questions.

Tight Lines,

Outreach and Education, Division of Marine Fisheries Management

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"*The sun, red and enormous, began to sink into the western sky*
And simultaneously the moon began to rise
On the other side of the river with its own glorious shade of red
Coming up out of the trees like a russet firebird
The sun and the moon seemed to acknowledge each other
And they moved in both apposition and concordance
In a breathtaking dance of light across the oaks and the palms
My father watched it, and I thought he would cry again
He had returned to the sea, and his heart was a low country heart"

Opening to Prince of Tides by Jimmy Buffet from the album Hot Water, 1988

The 2023 GOFC Oyster Roast will be held on Saturday, January 13th at the Pedersen Farm near Trenton

What is it?

The Annual GOFC Oyster Roast is a great opportunity to spend a fun evening roasting oysters over an open fire while swapping fishing stories with your fellow GOFC members. Tim and Linda Pedersen have graciously offered to have us back to their beautiful farm near Trenton. We're starting a little earlier this year since the weather has been a bit on the cooler side, but the fun will still continue well into the evening. In addition to the delicious roasted oysters, there will be fried oysters, hamburgers, hotdogs, sodas, and all the fixin's provided by the club.

Everyone is encouraged to bring a side dish or desert for sharing.

The Oyster Roast will be free to all GOFC members in good standing.

When and Where?

The Annual Oyster Roast will be held **Saturday, January 13th** starting at **3:00 PM** at the Pedersen's Farm at **16251 42nd Court, Trenton, FL.**

What to Bring:

A side dish or desert for sharing, your favorite shucking gear if you have it, and a comfy chair for relaxing around the fire.

Directions from Gainesville:

Head West on Newberry Road (FL 26) to Main Street in Trenton (US 129)
Turn Left on Main Street (US 129) and head south for 3.6 miles
Turn Right on NW 160th St. and head west for 1.3 miles
Turn Right on to NW 42nd Ct. and follow the lime rock road around two turns until the road ends at the Pedersen's boat barn.

Parting Pics