

## Northern Neck Anglers Club

### May 2017 Newsletter

([www.northernneckanglersclub.wordpress.com](http://www.northernneckanglersclub.wordpress.com))

The 2017 trophy rockfish (striped bass) season is now open in Virginia and Maryland waters and the Potomac River. Fishing for trophy rockfish has been disappointing so far this season, with many members reporting long days trolling with no fish caught. Charter captains are also reporting difficulty in finding these fish for their customers. Three predominant theories have emerged (1) the big rockfish are still upriver as a result of a late spawn this year and better fishing is coming, (2) the big rockfish have already spawned and left as a result of warmer temperatures and (3) the number of big rockfish have declined significantly as a result of overfishing or other factors and what we are experiencing is a lack of fish as compared to prior years.

The club's first member tournament of the year, the Trophy Rockfish Tournament sponsored by the NNAC, will be held over the weekend of May 6-7, weather permitting. Gift certificates will be awarded to the top two anglers (\$75 for first place and \$50 for second place) and Angler of the Year (AOY) points will be awarded as follows: 4 points for first place, 3 points for second place, 2 points for third place and 1 point each for all other entries. If a member catches fish on both days of the tournament, only the largest (by weight) of the two fish will count for placings and AOY points. If a fish is weighed in from Maryland waters of Chesapeake Bay (not the Potomac River) remember to also record the length to the nearest one quarter inch, a requirement of Maryland DNR for prior approval to hold a rockfish tournament in their waters.

The club's first meeting of 2017 was held on Saturday April 29. The meeting was well attended and those present enjoyed informative presentations by three representatives of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) on the new requirements for acquisition of permits to harvest striped bass (rockfish) and cobia from Virginia waters and the required reporting for these two species.

The club's next meeting is scheduled for 7pm Saturday June 10 at the Wicomico Parish Church Hall, 5191 Jessie DuPont Memorial Highway, Wicomico Church VA. Mark your calendar and plan to attend. Captain Bob Reed will be making a presentation on fishing for cobia, the season for which opens June 1 and closes on September 15.

In 2007, the Virginia General Assembly enacted a law to establish a boating safety education requirement for all motorboat operators using a motor of 10hp or greater (including boats documented by the U.S. Coast Guard) and personal watercraft operators (i.e. jet skis). As of July 1, 2016, all motorboat operators, irrespective of age, must have completed the boating safety education course. The law provides an exception for an individual who is operating the motorboat under the onboard direct supervision of a person who has already met the boating safety education requirement (so you can teach your kids or family members/friends how to safely operate a boat). At least one person on board must have met the boating safety education requirement and is responsible for directly supervising the motorboat operator in the safe operation of the boat.

Good luck fishing this season.

Tight lines!!

John O'Connor

NNAC President