



# HARDLINES

Northern Neck Anglers Club Monthly Newsletter



## What's inside this Issue:

Club News, Tournament Updates, Fishing Reports, Boating Safety Tips and more

## TOURNAMENT: SPRING TROPHY ROCKFISH May 2021

## Member Spotlight: Natalie Roy

## Greetings NNAC Members,

Happy May to all NNAC members! At least I hope you are currently happy even though the weather gods have put a severe hammering on our first tournament of 2021. Opening day of trophy rockfish season saw a brutal May 1 start of wind and high seas. That pattern continued pretty much unabated for six days straight days as small craft advisories dominated the news.

As I write this, starting the second weekend of the tournament, we've lost another day today due to high winds. Sunday, May 11 looks better, so at least we might get one official tournament day recorded during the first two weekends.

But although some of us have been able to get out during the week on charter boats, none of that counts as far as our NNAC trophy rockfish tournament. We did make some observations I'd like to share here. One, there are not a lot of people fishing. On the third day of the trophy season, we had four boats fishing around us and the conditions were not bad at all. In fact, it was nearly flat in the afternoon. The next day was a Tuesday and they were maybe 30 boats in the Potomac but nothing like I've seen in years past. Maybe the forecast of severe weather had something to do with that. A special thanks to Ryan Rogers and Doug Gray who worked very hard trying to find fish for us on their excellent charter boat the Midnight Sun. And we did dodge a Northern Neck tornado when we got back in but that's another story for another day.

The forecast for rockfish populations this spring did not look good and in fact I'm afraid that's what we are seeing. Of course, Virginia canceled their trophy season altogether for the second straight year.

Maryland and the Potomac are open, but I've not seen many fish. Tom and I were able to take part in two charters this week and we had mixed results. One day was decent and the other day was one fish only. One of our members has fished the Potomac on his own boat a couple of days and found one fish yesterday.

## Member Spotlight

### NATALIE ROY

**Rivah Home: Reedville**

**Favorite Fish to Target: Cobia**

*Cover Story* – Some of my earliest memories are memories of fishing on the bay. The rush you get from landing that huge fish that you worked so hard for is truly addicting and it never gets old. Even after twenty some years of being stuck on the boat with dad all day, it never gets old. Growing up I was a junior member of the Northern Neck Anglers Club and not to brag I won a good many tournaments back in the day. I still fish with my dad every year as much as I can, and I learn something new each trip. Last year's lesson was on cobia, my new favorite fish! Those long chumming lessons paid off as we landed multiple fish and a personal record for me! Of course using live bait on light tackle for striped bass or red fish never disappoints either and both put up a good fight! The big fish aren't always the goal, just having a day on the dock catching spot for bait can be a day well spent for me! I can't express how much my dad and the Northern neck anglers club have taught me over the years and how much more they will teach me. Fishing truly is a great teacher and past time; it may require a lot of patience and dedication but it all pays when you land that fish or if you just have a good day in the water!

## Club News

Well, Covid is still around on the Northern Neck but things are looking better. We had a tremendous turn out at our "Ask the Pro's" day in April at the Reedville Fishermans museum. We thank everyone who came out as the crowd was tremendous. We signed up several new members and returning membership continues to look strong. Tom Hedgpeth had a handout on Cobia fishing at the event which he unfortunately ran out of. However, he posted it on the club website under the Fishing Links for everyone to access.

The next meeting is on May 22, Saturday night 7 PM, and will be outdoors at the Reedville Fishermens Museum. But it is our hope the June meeting will be back at Wicomico Parish Church or at Chesapeake Boat Basin in Kilmarnock. As soon as the VDH allows a group of our size to move back indoors, we will do so.

For those of you who have not renewed their membership for 2021, please get your dues and your release form to us by the next meeting. There is a grace period but before long we will discontinue sending the newsletter to nonmembers.

I recently had a member contact me and said he would have liked to have attended our recent "Ask A Pro" club event, but he didn't know about it. We investigated further with him and found the email address we historically used for him had recently been changed. The club had not been advised of new one. I had another member contact me and tell me he wasn't getting the newsletters anymore. So, we double checked his email address and again, he said "oh that's an old one and I never look at that one anymore".

Often, when we send these newsletters out, we get a couple where the newsletter goes to an email address that we have used for quite some time and now it bounces. This is because people change their email address occasionally but forget to update us.

There are four ways for you to know about club event schedules:

- 1) Monthly club newsletter announcements

- 2) Club website. Tom does a great job with this and I can guarantee you we pay strict attention to the schedules and updating information there.

- 3) Club Facebook page. I sometimes put three or four new posts up a week. There are schedule items posted as well as fishing information, photographs, etc.

- 4) Finally, you are welcome to text me at (316) 304-1475 if you have schedule questions.

We look forward to seeing everyone on May 22 for the next meeting. I hope some of you catch some nice rockfish. June brings our cobia tournament, and the fireworks will start!

## Tournament Updates

None of the weigh stations reported any fish weighed in for the Club's Trophy Rockfish tournament.

Next month is the club's Cobia Classic tournament. Target species are Cobia Croaker.

## Fishing Reports

Here are photos of some decent fish taken recently.





are guessing some of the sport fish population think it's just not worth it with current fishery population numbers. We may not even have a trophy rockfish season in the Potomac, Maryland, or Virginia next year if it continues like this. That's not a scientific observation, only our educated guess.

### Regulations Changes

No regulation changes to report in any of the tournament zones. Regulations sometime change during the season so always check regulations in your zone before keeping a fish.

### Fishing Safety

As the weather warms up, we have seen more boats out but again, the weekend weather has not provided great conditions for fishing or cruising so far. But that hasn't stopped a number of reported boat accidents with fatalities in the Chesapeake. I think it's important to point these out so that we continue to realize vigilance is always necessary as the Bay is unforgiving of inattention and a relaxed boating attitude. The continued lessons we always seem to note during these boating accident recaps is that life preservers do save lives. It's always sad to note how many people are lost in the Bay because something simple like a life preserver is not worn. Spend \$150 on an inflatable and you will forget you have it on.

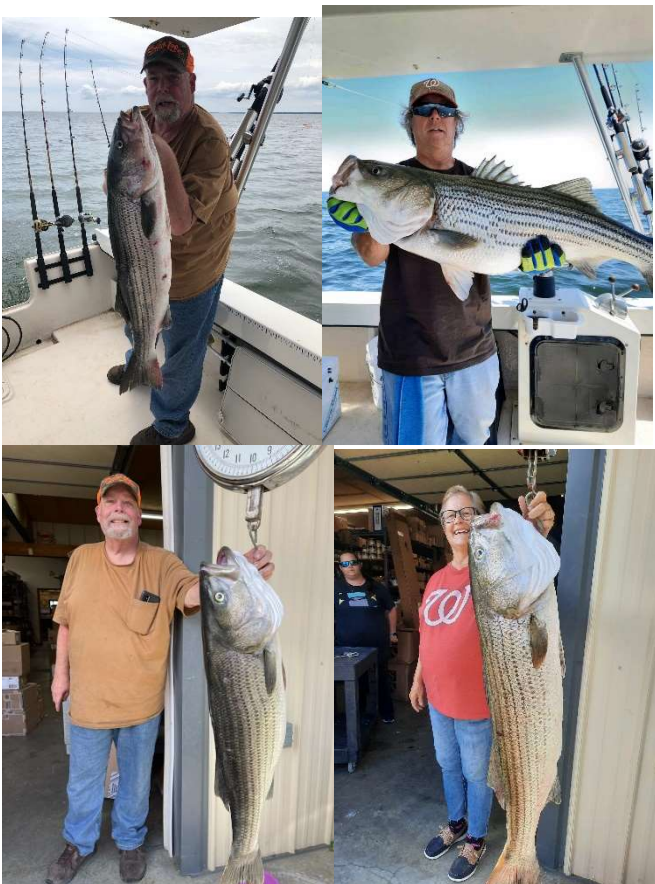
<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/video-six-boaters-rescued-by-helicopter-off-cape-henry/>

<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/four-boaters-rescued-after-nighttime-boat-collision-near-bay-bridge/>

**From John O'Conner currently languishing in Florida:**

### FWC Releases 2020 Boating Accident Statistical Report

With the release of the 2020 Boating Accident Statistical Report, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) encourages boaters to focus on taking the necessary steps for a safer boating experience.



Congratulations to Earl Pierotti and Robin Cunningham for entering their catch in the Club's 2021 Best of Species contest.

It's obvious the Potomac area sport fishing fleet numbers out trying to catch trophy rockfish is way down. That is partially because of the weather but I was out there on some pretty nice afternoons during the week and there just were not many boats out. We

"A leading contributor to boating accidents is the operator's inattention or failure to maintain a proper lookout, said Lt. Seth Wagner, FWC Boating and Waterways Section. "Many operators believe they are looking around, but they are not recognizing potential hazards or are distracted by dividing their attention between things like electronic devices or other occupants in the boat."

In 2020, 402 boating accidents involved collisions and 44% of them were due to the operator's inattention or failing to maintain a proper lookout. "It is important for boaters to keep in mind that a vessel should be treated with the same responsibility as a car or truck so everyone can enjoy Florida's beautiful waters," Wagner said.

Florida had 836 boating accidents in 2020, which is 113 more accidents than in 2019, a 16% increase. A total of 79 people lost their lives last year in boating accidents, 14 more than the previous year. Since 2003, falling overboard has been the leading type of fatal accident with drowning as the leading cause of death. Of the drowning victims, 88% were not wearing a life jacket. Today's boaters can choose from several models of light and comfortable, inflatable belt-pack or over-the-shoulder life jackets that can be worn while fishing or enjoying the sun. Events can happen quickly and unexpectedly, and boaters might not have time to grab their life jacket before finding themselves in the water. The message is clear, "Life Jackets Save Lives."

## Tackle Box

OK, many of you know I am an unabashed lover of all things seatrout. And puppy drum, and peacock bass....

So, I tend to default to the latest trout baits, and I think I've come onto a good one. It's not that these haven't been around for a while as they are readily available (at times) at RW's, Bass Pro Shop, Cabela's, Green Top, and even WalMart online. But that does not mean they are currently available. Those of you looking for specific tackle item know that is a tough game right now. And it does not seem to be getting better.



Menu **Salt STRONG** TACKLE SHOP

STRIKE KING SPECKLED TROUT MAGIC

☆☆☆☆ No reviews

Size

**\$3.99** Insider Member  
**\$4.99** Non-Member Price

Due To COVID, The Entire Industry Is Experiencing Inventory Shortage

NOTIFY ME WHEN AVAILABLE

Anyway, the amazing guys at Salt Strong have these in stock, at least today. Whoops, no longer in stock!

## Bay News:

This is a really good article about Bay creatures during the past 50 years. I thought everyone would enjoy reading this:

<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/transformation-and-tradition/>

## Boating the Bay:

<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/once-upon-our-time/>

## Bay Health:

<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/cleaning-up-the-bay/>

## Fishing for the Silver King in VA:

Many of us know about the truths and rumors of the tarpon population during summer in Virginia. There was a verified catch on a GoPro camera of a 50 pound plus tarpon taken at Dameron Marsh several years ago. If you haven't seen that video, it's a good one:

<https://youtu.be/RcOTRCbP2EQ>

But how many of us knew that there was a viable tarpon fishery in the 30's here in the Bay? Most of us think these fish have shown up more recently as the Bay and ocean water temperatures creep higher. But they've been here for a while. Maybe we just didn't know how to fish for them?

## An Exclusive Offer from our Partner BoatUS

Limited Time Offer: Buy a Cobra Marine VHF Radio and get complimentary 1-year @BoatUS membership <https://bit.ly/3fsfud5> #Cobramarine #vhfradio

## About Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS):

Celebrating more than 50 years, BoatUS is the nation's largest organization of recreational boaters with more than 800,000 members. We are the boat owners' voice on Capitol Hill and fight for their rights. We are The Boat Owners Auto Club and help ensure a roadside trailer breakdown doesn't end a boating or fishing trip before it begins. When boats break down on the water, TowBoatUS brings them safely back to the launch ramp or dock, 24/7. BoatUS offers GEICO boat insurance policies that give boat owners affordable, specialized coverage and superior service they need. We help keep boaters safe and

our waters clean with assistance from the nonprofit BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water. Visit BoatUS.com.

## About Cobra Electronics:

Cobra Electronics is a major brand of Cedar Electronics, a global supplier of connected automotive and consumer electronics solutions. Cobra provides award-winning products and solutions that include connected radar detectors, smart dash cams, CB and marine radios, power inverters, portable jump starters, and more. Cobra's connected driver community and sensor-based network unlocks over 100 million vehicle-to-vehicle and shared alerts annually from speed traps to red light camera locations. Leveraging its 50-year history of producing high-quality, reliable, and dependable solutions, Cobra extends the Cedar Electronics mission to empower people to Drive Smarter and Safer. To learn more please visit [www.cobra.com](http://www.cobra.com)

Don't forget to check the club's website ([northernneckanglersclub.com](http://northernneckanglersclub.com)) and Facebook page for other club related information.

Fish on!!



Ben Ames  
President, NNAC

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If you would like to contribute content, photos or have any suggestion of things you'd would like to see included in the newsletter or on the club website, please forward it to the club's email address at: [fishNNAC@gmail.com](mailto:fishNNAC@gmail.com) and we would be more than happy to publish it.

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