



HARDLINES

Northern Neck Anglers Club Monthly Newsletter

Member Spotlight:
Steve Cunningham

COBIA CLASSIC UPDATE
June 2021

What's inside this Issue:
Club News, Tournament Updates,
Fishing Reports, Boating Safety Tips
and more

WWW.NORTHERNNECKANGLERSCLUB.COM

Greetings NNAC Members,

You mean we are already into the last couple weeks of June 2021? Looking back a year ago to 2020, with all things in life impacted in a way none of us could have imagined, it's incredible to think one of the only things we have to worry about now are whether cobia will consistently open their collective mouths!

We, of course, know many Americans are still suffering with Covid and much of the world remains in dire straits. I certainly don't mean to minimize their struggle. I'm only pointing out that things are so improved now for most of us that we can enjoy a little travel and a little fishing with our family and friends. Our prayers are with those who are not so fortunate.

Club News

Many of you are new members and I can tell you, all will enjoy having the opportunity to attend our July meeting at Wicomico Church Parish, typically the home of the Northern Neck Angler club. We will discuss that next month and will provide you with the address and directions, although it is simple to find.

But for our upcoming June meeting on Saturday, June 26, we are being hosted by Chesapeake Boat Basin in Kilmarnock. Many of you are familiar with their marina facility on Indian Creek about 3 miles east of Kilmarnock. But our Saturday night meeting will be held at their sales office which is across the street from the McDonald's on Main Street in Kilmarnock. There are usually a couple of Boston Whalers for sale and on display at the brick building, which used to host a car dealership and later a NAPA parts store. But it is home to Chesapeake Boat Basin's sales department now. We have a couple of informative speakers so I know you will want to attend. More on that later.

As a very important adjunct to our meeting, you need to know there will be a very limited number of chairs. In fact, we are asking everyone to bring a folding chair or a bag chair just as you would for a church picnic or an outdoor concert. We will have a few on hand but please don't count on anything other than the chair you bring. They just don't have the number of chairs that we normally need in their facility, so we are happy to bring our own.

Member Spotlight

STEVE CUNNINGHAM

Joined NNAC: 2013

Rivah Home: Ingram Bay

Cover Story – Like most fishing enthusiasts, I got hooked as a youngster. My grandfather bought me my first rod at the age of four. I still have that rod but it has been retired to my fishing man cave. I fished with my father and brothers many weekends throughout the Spring, Summer and Fall on the Great South Bay of Long Island, the Shinnecock Canal and Peconic Bay on a rented wooden 12' row boat from Captain Eddie's for "winter" flounder, blowfish (sugar toads) and blackfish. They are some of my earliest and best memories of growing up with my family.

After getting married I convinced my wife that we "needed" a boat to introduce our two children to this sport. It was a 21' Seaswirl Striper walk-around with a 150 Johnson. We trailered it to the Long Island Sound for many years and had many great years of fishing for chopper bluefish, rockfish and flounder. My son was hooked and still loves to get out fishing whenever he can. My daughter, on the other hand, only fishes with a bobber and only if I bait her hook.

We first came to the Northern Neck in 2004. We purchased a weekend place off Ingram Bay and I upgraded to a 22' Grady White with a 250 Yamaha. At that time I always enjoyed the solitude of fishing alone after a hectic week at work. I did that for many years and would say that my most memorable solo fish was a 57 lb cobia caught in June 2015. It took me seven attempts to net. I'm glad he finally gave up. I was exhausted!

Since the tragedy of one of our club members fishing alone, I now fish more with my son, my friends or my wife. She netted the fish in this photo. I still have a lot to learn about fishing the Chesapeake Bay but that's what makes it fun.

June 26 Meeting Guest Speakers

Chesapeake Boat Basin will provide a presentation on boat and motor maintenance. Discussions will include general required maintenance for boats and motors, especially an emphasis on keeping your warranties intact, and selective annual maintenance what should be done to keep your equipment in great shape. From oil changes to water pumps, impellers, spark plugs, filters, etc., it all matters, and manufacturers vary on their recommendations.

We will also have a special guest speaker who is an excellent charter captain based out of Smith Point. I have included his résumé below. He will have a presentation and we will be free to ask questions. If you have not met Zane before you are in for a treat, and we will have a great evening hosting Zane Oliver.



Zane's Bio:

Hello everyone, I'm Captain Zane Oliver I'm 30 years old and have been the owner and operator of Northern Neck sportfishing beginning in March of 2016. I grew up in Westmoreland County and have been working on the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River my entire life mostly crabbing and fishing. Since 2016 I fish around 150 days a year from May-December. And I also guide sea duck hunting trips from Mid-December-January with Capt. Jeff Rankins. Between chasing rockfish in May up the Potomac River to chasing schools of bull Red Drum across the bay I strive to make everyday a successful trip and learn something new to apply to my next trip.

Tournament Updates

No one weighed in a fish for the Trophy Rockfish Tournament. The first 3 days of the 6-day tournament were canceled due to Small Craft Advisories.

The 1st weekend of the 2-weekend Cobia Classic tournament was canceled due to Small Craft Advisories. The tournament was shortened this year to 2 weekends due to the delayed start of the Cobia season. June 26-27 will be the last weekend for the Cobia Classic.

At the last club meeting, club president Ben Ames on behalf of the NNAC Board proposed to replace Croaker with White Perch. By member vote at the meeting, the proposal was accepted, and White Perch was added to the tournament as the 2nd target species. It has been added as an eligible species to the Best of Species Contest.

Also at the meeting, it was proposed to add Cobia as a 3rd target species to the August Spanish Lessons tournament. Again, by member vote, the proposal was accepted.

Fishing Reports

As we know, cobia season in Virginia was pushed back two weeks this year to June 15. I had the opportunity to fish three days so far on two different boats and am batting .333 for the privilege of being skunked two out of three days. Tom Hedgpeth and I did manage to put longtime NNAC member Ed Fortunato on a nice cobia last week, which was Ed's



first cobia. It was a privilege to be involved with those guys on that morning and we did have a nice result.

But it's spotty at best. I don't know anyone that has consistently gone out and caught fish every day.



Captain Earl Pierotti and his crew helped NNAC member Robin land a nice fish on the same day Ed got his. I know Robin was thrilled and congratulations to her.

Earl also managed to boat a few throwbacks as well.



A variety of fish have been boated recently by members that are noteworthy. Among the species are mackerel, white perch, flounder, speckled trout, and rockfish. The following are a few of those lucky nice catches:



We have hit cobia instruction pretty hard at our two club functions in April and May. But these two good articles may add to your knowledge base. Cobia lures, techniques and tips are discussed here:

<https://fishinglidokey.com/cobia-fishing-tackle-lures/>

<https://finnsfishingtips.com/the-best-cobia-lures/>

If you want to know the latest on where to buy eels, bunkers, chum, both frozen and fresh, at the best prices around, be at the meeting on Saturday night and we will spill our secrets!

If you don't subscribe to the following online Chesapeake fishing newsletter, you should. They are available free of charge and available in print in several places throughout the Northern Neck. But just click on this link, read this month magazine, and subscribe to it for free:

<https://www.fishtalkmag.com/>

Fishing Safety

A float plan is an overview of a boat trip that can give authorities a jumpstart in looking for a boater if he or she fails to reach his or her destination.

A float plan should include at a minimum:

- (1) description of the vessel
- (2) number of persons onboard
- (3) destination, including the general route to be taken.
- (4) Contact information
- (5) Timeframe of the outing

A detailed float plan should be left with a family member, a reliable friend, a marina dock master or anyone else you trust to contact the US Coast Guard in case of an emergency. Do not file a float plan directly with the US Coast Guard. You can find a link to a Float Plan form provided by the US Coast Guard on the NNAC website under Fishing Links.

Bay News (Bad)

<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/man-drowns-on-potomac-during-attempted-swim/>

<https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/how-much-do-crabs-cost/65-f94493e3-4196-4df1-aa6d-78c9488c1c04>

<https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/maryland/maryland-blue-crabs-juvenile-crab-population-is-lowest-since-1990/65-93405cb4-ac6b-4f4d-9da7-a89d4f644635>

<https://www.cdc.gov/vibrio/faq.html>

There will be more on vibrio at the June and July meetings.

<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/rockfish-poaching-crackdown-74-undersized-stripers-caught-on-md-s-eastern-shore/>

Does anyone really doubt poaching exists in more than one place on the bay? I think not.

The following article was reported widely in the media. I've heard it from a number of sources as well as from watermen. Most of it is conjecture at this point but we all know something needs to happen. Whether it's commercial fishing, sport fishing, menhaden fishing, something is seriously out of whack. The trophy season this year for stripers was terrible. We all know that. So read this article and make your own opinion. But we haven't heard the last of the current rockfish population struggle, that's for sure:

<https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/maryland/new-rockfish-moratorium-warns-architect-of-ban-saved-species-36-years-ago/65-923216d5-4302-4a16-b701-0ee222f94d0a>

Bay News (Good)

<https://chesapeakebaymagazine.com/aspiring-va-charter-captain-catches-potential-world-record-red-drum/>

<https://www.pilotonline.com/opinion/editorials/vp-ed-editorial-chesapeake-bay-funding-0617-20210616-p5ivtrii2za47pizsoa32a2z7e-story.html>

That's it for June. See you next Saturday on June 26 at Chesapeake Beach Basin's sales office in Kilmarnock. If you can find McDonald's, you are there! Bring your wife, your husband, significant other, or as many guests as you like. And maybe most importantly, bring a young fisherman with you, ready to learn!

Fish on!!



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If you would like to contribute content or photos to be included in the newsletter or on the club website, please forward it to the club's email address at: fishNNAC@gmail.com and we would be more than happy to publish it.

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