



HARDLINES

Northern Neck Anglers Club Monthly Newsletter

FLOUNDER BASH

July 2021

Member Spotlight:
Tom Smith

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

Greetings NNAC Members,

Here we are in the midst of rock-bottom dead center volcanic summertime heat. I've been out a few times chasing a variety of finny species, but frankly, it's not much fun unless you are talking about the first three hours or the last thirty minutes of the day.

But for those tough NNAC anglers who are out there with some regularity, they are finding the cobia are still here, the mackerel are increasing in numbers, some nice spot and bottom fish catches have been made, bluefish moving in, and a few big red drum are active. Oh yeah, did I mention rays by the thousands?

Note that I didn't address striper fishing as I've not really run into anyone recently who has caught anything other than a few shorts. Not that many fishermen are chasing stripers over cobia currently. And for good reason. Enjoy them while they are here.

Club News

We are delighted to say that we will be back into the fellowship hall at **Wicomico Parish Church** for our next two meetings. That's the July and September meetings as we are off with no meeting scheduled in August. That's the way we've always done it in the club to allow for members who like to take August vacations and therefore will not be in the area to attend a meeting. This church works great because it's a little more central to our membership base and it's also air-conditioned! For those new members who have never attended a meeting there, park in the back and come in under the walkway canopy. We will see you on Saturday night at 7 PM!

We plan to have 2 guest speakers. Jan Jamrog, 4-time NNAC Angler of the Year and All-Time Angler of the Year points leader will be the guest speaker. Jan will share his fishing techniques and secrets for targeting Spanish Mackerel and Bluefish. With the next tournament featuring Spanish Mackerel and Bluefish, you will not want to miss this. The other guest speaker is Susanna Musick, a Marine Recreation Specialist with Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Suzanna will talk about the VA Game Fish Tagging Program and the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Forecast.

Member Spotlight

TOM SMITH

Rivah Home: Windmill Point Area

Cover story - Tom has been a member since the club's inception. He served for years as Club Secretary and for 2 years as Club President. He started fishing in freshwater as a youth and has Virginia citation awards for white bass and largemouth bass. He started fishing in the bay over 50 years ago and remembers the days when 10-15 pound bluefish were common catches. His largest bluefish was 36 inches long and 17 pounds. Tom was the NNAC Angler of the Year in 2017. He holds Virginia saltwater citations for striped bass, spot, and speckled trout of which he holds the club Best of Species top position for his 8 lb 1 oz speck.

Tom has a BS degree from the U of Richmond, and after serving as an officer in the Army in Vietnam, Tom got his MBA degree from UVA in 1971. He worked as a Research Analyst at the Highway Research Council at UVA, at VEPCO in Fuel Resources in oil & coal supply, and at Massey Energy as President of Massey Metallurgical Coal.

Tom previously bought a lot and built a weekend cottage on Buggs Island Lake, which he sold in 1998 and then bought a lot on Mosquito Creek off the lower Rappahannock River, where he and his wife, Barry, built a house there in 1999. This weekend home became their main residence in 2003, when his early retirement allowed them to move there full time. Tom has a 25 foot Parker boat, which gets little use in recent years since Tom prefers light tackle fishing from his 16 foot Carolina Skiff for a couple of hours in the waters near his home.

Tom joined the Rappahannock Pistol & Rifle Club since moving to the area to sharpen his shotgun skills since he and Barry enjoy waterfowl hunting from blinds near their home. He also started participating in the RPRC competition events in pistol, rifle, and shotgun with Tom winning the annual club championship for the last 12 years.

Tournament Updates

The following are the top 3 finishers from each division in the club's Flounder Bash Tournament. Target species included Flounder and Cobia. Unfortunately, no entries were reported in the Flounder division. Only 1 entry was recorded for the Cobia Division, Tom Hedgpeth was fishing during the only official tournament day (7/4) and boated a 34lb 13 oz Cobia to win the division. No other entries were recorded for the Cobia division. 5 of the 6 scheduled tournament days had to be canceled due to Small Craft Advisories (SCA) posted in the northern tournament zones.

Cobia Division

Place	Angler	Date	Weight
1	Tom Hedgpeth	7/4/2021	34lbs 13ozs
2			
3			

Flounder Division

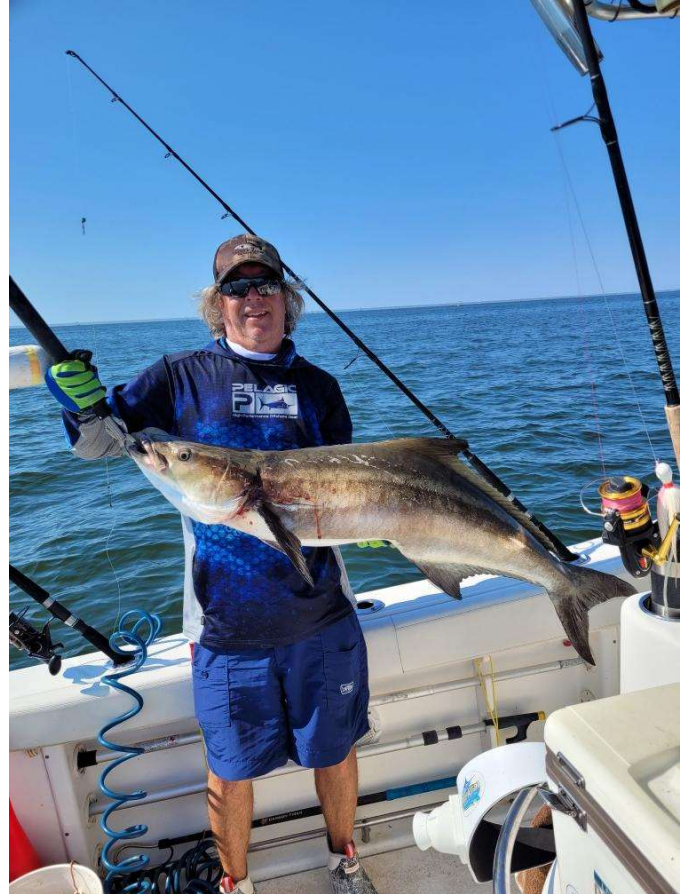
Place	Angler	Date	Weight
1			
2			
3			

Congratulations to all the members that participated in the tournament. Thanks to all our tournament sponsors and weigh stations for their continued support for the club and its members.

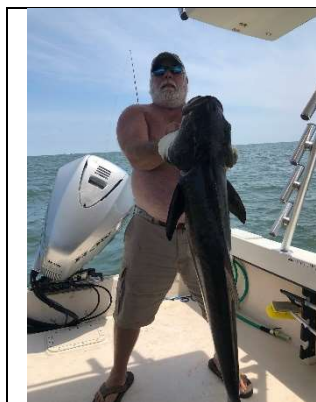
Next month is the club's Spanish Lessons tournament. Targeted species are Spanish Mackerel, Bluefish and Cobia.

Fishing Reports

Up to about a week ago, the Cobia bite was red hot. Despite SCAs issued during the tournament weekends, some members took to the bay for a prize Cobia while the bite was hot. The cobia bite has since slowed a little after Tropical Storm Elsa rolled through. However, here are a few members that were able to land a prize.



Tom Hedgpeth with his tournament winning cobia. The fish grab a live eel will chumming Smith Point Flat on an incoming tide. The fish measured just over 46" and weighed a heaping 34lbs. 13ozs.



Earl Pierotti's crew with a 50+ inch cobia



Tom Hedgpeth with a cobia but just too short.



Jim Morgan with a nice Cobia



Brian McMenamin and son Ian with a 46"er



Earl Pierotti with a beauty



Robin Cunningham also got in on the action



Andy Huang tried his luck as well. Although he was able to boat this nice fish, it didn't make the 40" mark.



The Spanish Mackerel and Bluefish are out in large numbers. You can easily find schools of these fish by looking for working birds.

Remember to report your cobia trips and catch to VMRC using the Saltwater Journal online reporting system. If you do not report your catch, they will not issue a

Cobia permit for the future. A link to the VA Saltwater Journal can be found under the Fishing Links menu on the Club website.

Regulations Changes

For those of you who fish Maryland and Potomac River waters currently, don't forget the following:

"STRIPER ALERT: as of July 16th, striped bass fishing will be closed in Maryland through the end of the month. This includes targeting them for catch and release fishing. We have received many requests for more detailed information about the closure, such as specific lures or tactics that may or may not be used, but we can't expand beyond the [DNR's latest guidance](#) and unfortunately have no further information on how the state will determine enforcement of the regulations. The best we can do is to suggest taking all reasonable measures to comply with the law while enjoying your pursuit of other species." Not as many of us fish Maryland waters this time of year but that will change in the fall when migrating gannets point the way to sizable assembling striper schools. But that's about three months away for now.

Potomac River Fisheries Commission has also closed the Potomac River to targeting Striped Bass. The closure began 7/7/2021 and the season resumes 8/21/2021.

Fishing Safety



Need I say more? Do any of you think that speed and or alcohol had anything to do with this? That boat is kind of like a turtle sitting on a fence post. It needed help to get there.

As temperatures and humidity continue to soar, remember to apply enough sunscreen to exposed areas off the skin. Wide brim hats, neck gators and long sleeve UV performance shirts can provide relief to vulnerable skin. To learn how to properly protect yourself from UV rays, click the following link to the Skin Cancer Foundation.

[Sun Protection - The Skin Cancer Foundation](#)

Fishing Tips and Techniques

When fishing for Spanish Mackerel, take a 5-gallon bucket along with you. Mackerel are bleeders, so when you bring the fish on board, place it directly in the bucket to avoid getting blood all over your boat. Leave the fish in the bucket as you unhook it to minimize blood splatter. An added benefit of doing this, sometimes the fish will unhook itself while flopping in the bucket.

Tackle Box

Much has been written about modification of fishing lures. Certainly, if you have a favorite lure that has seen lots of service, the hooks may be getting rusty, certainly dull, but perhaps the lure is still in good shape, and you don't want to throw it out. The obvious thing to do is change hooks. You may want



pliers.

to change types of hooks, sometimes size and even design.

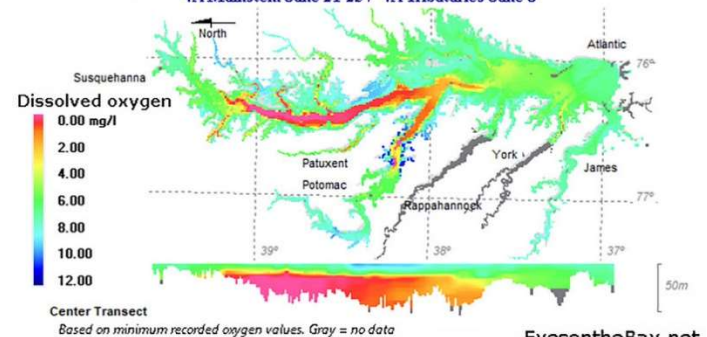
I like to change hooks on crank baits at least once a year if they are showing any wear at all and is a bait that you use often. It is a simple process, but you need to get the right sized hooks so that action of the bait won't be impeded.

Here's a sample of a modification I made on a Mirrolure and this works tremendously well. I think these hooks hold better, they stick the fish better, and leverage against the fish is better. You will need a hook replacement kit, easily available on the Northern Neck, and a good pair of proper ring

Around the Bay

Chesapeake Bay Dissolved Oxygen

Second June Cruise 2021 - MD Mainstem June 21-24 / MD Tributaries June 2-16
VA Mainstem June 21-25 / VA Tributaries June 8



Data collected by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Old Dominion University show that dissolved oxygen conditions in the Chesapeake Bay mainstem of Maryland and Virginia were better than average in June 2021. The hypoxic water volume — areas with less than 2 mg/l

oxygen — was 0.21 and 1.28 cubic miles during early and late June monitoring cruises, compared to historical early and late June averages (1985-2020) of 0.89 and 1.31 cubic miles. The early June report ranks as the best on record, and late June was slightly better than average.

In late June, this [forecast](#) expected Chesapeake Bay mainstem hypoxic volume 14% lower than the 35-year average due to reduced river flows from January through May 2021, as well as less nitrogen carried to the Bay because of nutrient management efforts. Maryland and Virginia's monitoring results thus far have matched the forecast of better-than-average conditions.

Crabs, fish, oysters, and other creatures in the Chesapeake Bay require oxygen to survive. Scientists and natural resource managers study the volume and duration of Bay hypoxia to determine possible impacts to bay life.

The Bay as A National Park Update

The Chesapeake Bay Is Closer Than Ever to Becoming a National Recreation Area. Click the link below to learn more.

<https://www.washingtonian.com/2021/07/14/chesapeake-bay-national-recreation-area/>

Don't Do This



I just changed boats from a cabin Parker boat to a center console. These CO2 squib life vests were perfectly happy being stored in the cabin of my

Parker during the past four years. Then I transferred them into a deck locker on my center console boat. Obviously, the lockers got a lot more sun and therefore heat than did the space I was using inside of a cabin. The squibs all fired due to over pressurization. I know what you're thinking. Why don't I just use a good quality orange standard life vest? That's an excellent question I can't answer....

Ethanol and Marine Engines/tanks

I know many of you saw a great discussion of boating with ethanol and what it can do to your tank and therefore your motor from Clay Holcomb during our last club meeting in June at Chesapeake Boat Basin. One of the problems with ethanol fuel is that ethanol loves water. It absorbs it from a number of sources: rainwater, humidity, wash down water, etc. Ethanol doesn't help rubber gaskets, plastic bits, etc., but the motor certainly doesn't like water either.

Obviously, the best thing for your motor is to not run ethanol fuel. But we all know that's expensive at more than four dollars/gallon currently.

There are several alternatives, but Clay mentioned one of the best is an ethanol treatment that can mitigate the 10% ethanol contained in most pump fuel. You can help things greatly by burning the fuel out of your tank on a regular basis so that the ethanol fuel doesn't have a chance to absorb water. Or, you can use a good quality anti ethanol treatment additive for ethanol fuel. We think this is a good one and it's fairly inexpensive. You can buy at many places, but Amazon can have it to your door in two days.

Brand: Startron
Star Tron Ethanol Gas Fuel Treatment Additive 16oz. Concentrate 256
Gallons



\$21⁹³

Have a great week and we look forward to a nice turnout and a super meeting on Saturday night. Don't forget, send us some pictures of your fishing successes or anything you see in the media that you think we should share with the general membership. We have 96 members now and are looking forward to announcing that we will most likely reach our goal of 100 members this week!

Fish on!!

Ben Ames
President
NNAC



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If you would like to contribute content, photos or suggestions 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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