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## THIS JUST IN, BEES ARE FISH?

Ok, once again, we are faced with another excellent example of factual news that is far stranger than anything I could ever make up. This particular example comes from California, imagine that!!

In an effort to keep our readers up to date on important news about fish, I bring this report for your consideration. Bees made it on to the Federally Endangered Species list in 2017, but because of some very specific language in California's regulations the act only applies to "any bird, mammal, fish, amphibian or reptile that is considered endangered". This gave agricultural groups that oppose protection of bees a loophole to work with since invertebrates or insects were not mentioned. Since they were not mentioned, they legally could not be protected in California.



Now the Conservationists, who wanted to protect the bees, went back to their Law Library and found that the California Fish and Game Code contained a rather surprising and detailed definition of fish. The Code stated that fish was defined as "wild fish, mollusk, crustacean, invertebrate or amphibian". Because the code did not specify aquatic invertebrates only, this left the door open for Bees to qualify to be Fish in the state of California. Naturally, this had to be ruled on by a California Court and, as you would expect, they agreed that bees are, in fact, defined as fish under California Law. Bees don't even have to just identify as fish, they actually are fish under the Law. There are 4 specific species of bees that actually qualify to be protected, but the only one really of interest to me is the Crotch Bumble Bee and no, I'm not making this up. I am particularly happy to live as far away from California as possible, while still in the continental US, because I do not wish to ever encounter even one single Crotch Bumble Bee.

*In any event, this brings to mind a variety of interesting and rather random thoughts.*

- Will there be a new and unexplored market in California for tiny rods, reels and baits for anglers to use while fishing for bees?
- Bee's tendency to fly in the air rather than swimming in the water increases the opportunities for California anglers to fish for bees nearly anywhere. Will this cause an explosion of tourism?
- Will PETA be outraged and suggest that the name Bee has a stigma, or perhaps a stingma, associated with it and suggest that people would be more likely to protect them if we renamed them as air kittens? For those who don't already know, PETA already has proposed that we rename fish as sea kittens.

Thanks to Jason from the office at Belle Harbour Marina for pointing this newsworthy item out to me, in the first place. Also, Flip the Bird insists that I explain that while birds and bees both fly around, birds are clearly not fish and no one had better be out there trying to fish for birds, this would bring down the considerable wrath of birds everywhere down upon us and it would not be pretty, as Alfred Hitchcock clearly illustrated in the movie.

**Flip and I are available at Belle Harbour Marina nearly every day in case you want to discuss the Birds, Bees and Fish.**

Merle



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**ON THE COVER:** August is still a great month for some awesome Tarpon fishing along the West Florida coast. Carl Lewis was able to release his, beach style, off Anna Maria Island on a recent trip. Nice poon, Carl!

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# FISH LIKE A GIRL My How Times Have Changed

by Misty Wells

The statement "You fish like a Girl" used to be something someone would say to imply that you can't fish, well let me tell you times have changed. The numbers of female anglers in the United States is the fastest growing demographic in the outdoors right now. There is starting to be a growing number of Ladies Tournaments popping up in the State of Florida and a growing number of established Tournaments are adding Ladies & Youth divisions. Right here in Pinellas County, there is the "Old Salts Ladies Tournament" and coming on Mother's Day Weekend is the "Suncoast Ladies Classic".

In September I put together an eclectic group of Ladies to fish the "Old Salts Ladies Tournament" on team "Let's Take it Outside". In putting the team together, I wanted a lot of diversity out on the water and I wanted

to take some ladies that really have not ever fished Offshore before. The line was as follows: Cynthia D. (aka Silent Slayer), Kelly M. (Kingfish Kelly),



Heather L. (seasoned angler), Victoria C. (seasoned angler 16 yrs.), Avery L. (9 yrs.) and myself. There was a great diversity of Offshore species on the list and our goal was to try and catch every single one of them. We left the dock at 6 p.m. to head West 70 miles to fish in water about 170 feet deep in the Gulf of Mexico. Our first target species was Mangrove Snapper, they are great to catch at night and we had lines in the water at 12:15 a.m. to get started.

To catch Mangrove Snapper that deep, first you need to chum them up, then using Spinning Rods with cut bait, you open the bail and let your bait fall along with the chum naturally. A mangrove bite is two fast taps, then the bite, you got to close that bail fast and start reeling, it's a great fight. Of course, while fishing for Mangrove Snapper I landed my

biggest American Red Snapper weighing in at 21 pounds and got a quick photo before releasing it. Cynthia had to 'one up me' as she reeled in a nice Blackfin Tuna weighing in at 14 lbs. They were not on the species list, but it sure did taste good.

Everyone caught some nice 5 to 7 pound Snapper, so it was time to move on. The sun was coming up, so it's time to catch some Kingfish and Amberjack. We pulled up to the wreck and first we cast out the flatline with a big Blue Runner and let it swim, then bait the 6 OTs with large pinfish and grass grunts for the AJs. I like using at least a 10 foot leader with an 8/0 circle hook with 6 oz. lead on 100 pound test line when fishing for the AJs. For AJs you want to stop the drop at about 20 feet, wait for a minute then keep descending while stopping every 20 feet or so, it gives them a chance to see your bait. Of course, if you have ever caught

an AJ you know that once they are on the hook, you had better hold on, they don't call them "Reef Donkeys" for nothing. To get the bite going quicker, you can also throw some live bait into the water to get the fish heated up.

While fishing for AJs, of course, the flatline went off right as the sun was coming up and Victoria jumped into action and landed the first Kingfish of the day, it weighed in at 26.03 pounds and she made it look easy. The bite was on fire for a while, next up on the Flatline was Kelly and the battle was on for her first Kingfish weighing in at 22.36 pounds. Now it is time to focus on AJs. Victoria had the largest at 29.86 pounds, Misty's weighed in at 22.87 pounds, Kelly's at 19.98 pounds, Heather's at 19.05 pounds, Cynthia's at 17.02 pounds & our youth angler Avery weighed in one at 15.01 pounds. We wrapped it up on the AJs and headed in to the weigh in, we had to be checked in by 5 p.m. After all that action, Victoria brought home a 3rd place trophy for her Amberjack and the rest of us got knocked off the board. It was amazing to watch all the Ladies bringing in their fish to get weighed. The winning Amberjack was a

whopping 74.33 pounds caught by Priscilla P, a new Lady Angler. I also want to give a shout out to Aliyah Lai for Winning Master Angler with 6 species caught.



All I can say is this, next time someone says "You fish like a Girl" say thank you because that means you're a

damn good angler. If you are looking for more information on Ladies Tournaments go to [www.oldsalt-fishing.org](http://www.oldsalt-fishing.org) and [www.suncoastladiesclassic.com](http://www.suncoastladiesclassic.com) and I will see you out on the water. ☑

Misty Wells host of "Let's Take It Outside" TV show airing on Fox Sports & World Fishing Network, Bass Pro-Outdoor Pro & Outdoor & Travel Writer. Founder of "A Reel Future" a non-profit organization devoted to teaching conservation & the passion of fishing to foster kids. Watch Season One at [mistywells.com](http://mistywells.com).



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# CREATURES FROM THE DEEP!

by Captain George Hastick

August can bring some of the hottest water temperatures to the bay area and Tampa Bay is ranked the 6th largest estuary in the world and Florida's largest open water estuary.

For the most part Tampa Bay is a shallow body of water with an average depth of approximately 12 feet. This is not to say we do not have deeper water in the bay, like the 80 miles of shipping channel, along with the 90-foot hole at Egmont Island or the 35-foot depths at St Petersburg bay reef to name a few spots, but for the most part, with the amount of flats we have, it is a shallow estuary. Due to this, in the heat of summer, our bay gets hot.

Sometimes Tampa Bay can have water temperatures reaching over 90 degrees on the flats especially at low tides during the heat of the day. At those times the water can be depleted of oxygen which can kill your bait in the livewell but can also make fish move out of that area or they can be lethargic and not want to chase a bait.

This is when you can change tactics with the same Scaled Sardines or Pinfish and fish deep for other species, that will be more active since the water usually will be moving and cooler since it is deeper. Now inside Tampa Bay you could be referring to anything deeper than 7-10 feet and that could be considered deep comparably to the flats at 1-4 feet

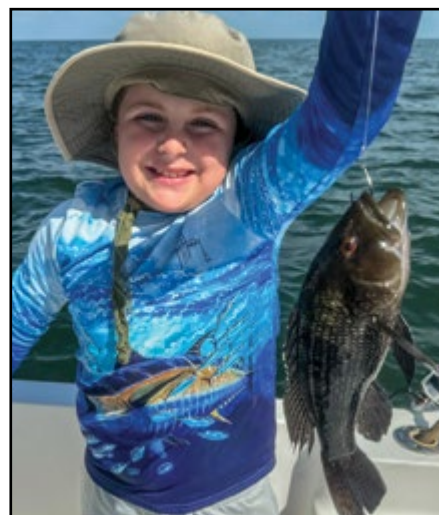


depths. I find many good rock piles and shell bottoms in 8-20 feet of water. I like the ones that are 8-12 feet where I can still free line baits or get away with minimal weight like a split shot or two.

The thing that is exciting about fishing this type of bottom in open water, is you never know what surprise catch you might get while

catching the usual suspects. Some of the typical fish you will catch in these areas can be black sea bass, gag grouper, mangrove

snapper, trout, shark and an occasional Cobia while fishing the bottom. While fishing the bottom make sure to put out some live baits in the upper water column and you might start catching drag screaming mackerel. Now some of those surprise catches can be King Mackerel, Red Grouper, Black Grouper, Permit, Lane Snapper and more.



Now when the seasons change, and winter starts to hit and the water temperature has dropped it will change the fish species that

are inhabiting your rock piles. The Mangrove Snapper will move out, along with some of the other species. Then the larger Sheepshead will take over creating a different type of good eating creature to target. So the deeper water rockpiles can be a good target to check out to get back into a good bite all year, so don't be afraid to fish deeper water! 🎣

Captain George Hastick of "Fish Hunter Fishing Charters" in St. Pete has been fishing the waters of Tampa for over 35 years & guiding over 20 years. From novice to professional; Captain George will make you feel as if you have been fishing buddies for years. Contact him at 727-525-1005, [www.FishTampa.com](http://www.FishTampa.com) or email [CaptGeorge@TampaBay.rr.com](mailto:CaptGeorge@TampaBay.rr.com).

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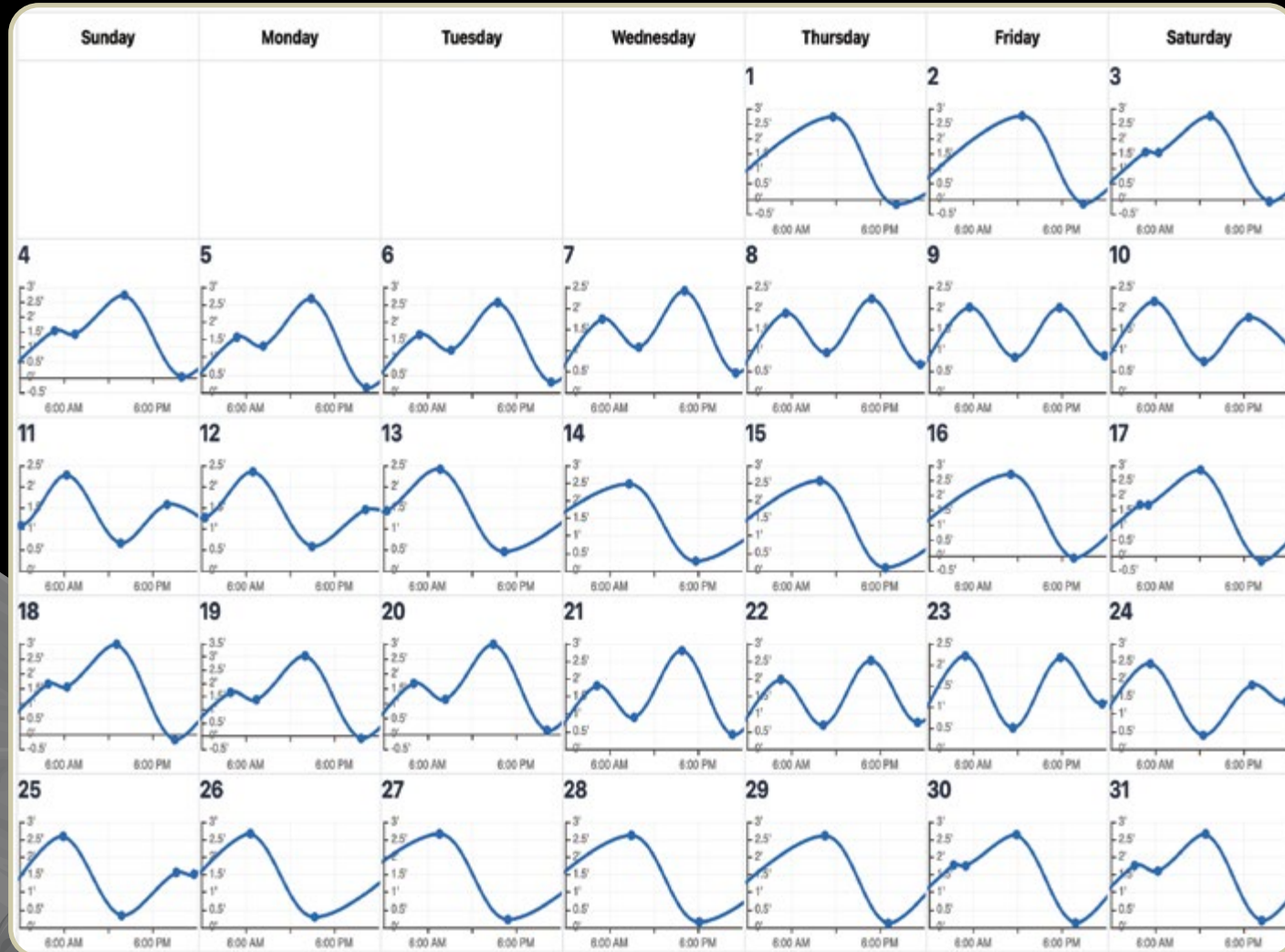
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**Conversions for Clearwater Beach Area**

High	Low	
-0:02	-0:10	Dunedin, St. Joseph Sound
-0:05	-0:15	Anclote Key, South End
+0:42	+0:42	Tarpon Springs, Anclote River
-0:07	-0:03	North Anclote Key
+0:41	+0:39	Old Port Tampa
+0:33	+0:53	Gulf Harbors
+0:42	+1:05	Hwy 19 Bridge, Pithlachascotee River
+0:50	+1:35	New Port Richey, Pithlachascotee River
+0:36	+0:43	Hudson, Hudson Creek

**Conversions for St. Marks River Area**

High	Low	
+0:23	+1:18	Everglades City
-1:17	-1:03	Cape Romano
-1:04	-1:08	Marco Island
-1:59	-2:04	Naples
-0:46	-0:09	Indian Bay
-0:59	-0:42	Bayport
-0:25	+0:23	Withlacoochee River

**Conversions for Tampa Bay Area**

High	Low	
+0:49	+0:58	Gandy Bridge
+1:38	+1:55	Courtney Campbell Cswy.
+1:38	+1:55	Safety Harbor
+0:20	+0:22	Ballast Point
+0:07	+0:26	Hillsborough Bay
+0:21	+0:29	McKay Bay Entrance
+0:41	+0:39	Old Port Tampa
-2:27	-2:24	Egmont Key
-2:53	-2:46	Anna Maria, Bradenton Bch
-2:10	-2:19	Anna Maria, City Pier
-1:24	-0:55	Bradenton, Manatee River
-0:30	+0:14	Redfish Pt., Manatee River
-2:22	-1:58	Mullet Key Channel, Skyway
+0:08	+0:17	Shell Point
-0:22	-0:29	Point Pinellas
-1:34	-1:30	Pass-a-Grille Beach
-1:32	-1:05	Gulfport
-1:18	-0:44	St. Pete Beach Causeway
-2:14	-2:04	John's Pass
-1:40	-1:18	Madeira Beach Causeway
-2:00	-1:25	Cortez, Sarasota Bay
-1:38	-0:58	Sarasota Bay
-2:02	-1:38	Venice Inlet
-0:57	-0:40	Englewood, Lemon Bay
-1:27	-0:59	Placida, Gasparilla Sound
+1:38	+1:56	El Jobean, Myakka River
+1:52	+2:30	Shell Point, Peace River
+1:06	+1:27	Punta Gorda, Charlotte Hbr.
-1:12	-1:56	Boca Grande, Charlotte Hbr.
-0:19	+0:26	Pineland, Pine Island
+0:43	+1:28	Matlacha Pass
-0:55	-1:14	Redfish Pass, Captiva Is.
-0:46	-0:20	Captiva, Pine Island Sound
-2:20	-2:28	Captiva, Gulf Side
-0:25	+0:16	Galt Isle, Pine Island Sound
-0:30	-0:44	St. James City, Pine Island
+2:08	+2:44	Fort Myers
+1:15	+2:02	Cape Coral Bridge
+1:08	+1:40	Iona Shores
+0:51	+0:42	Indian Rocks Beach, ICW



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# Tarpon TIPS

Captain Will Shook's



**BRIDGES  
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**T**arpon, Tarpon, and more Tarpon. Tarpon will be on the mind of most anglers this month and for good reason. It's that time of year when we are graced with the presence of the Silver King. It is time to lay to rest the nightmares from last year's disappointments and look forward to this year's opportunities. There are many different ways and many different areas to target tarpon. We will discuss a few different places and techniques, but keep in mind it's not the only way.



## SKYWAY TIPS

The big bridge will be a good place to start. There are several important keys to keep in mind when fishing around the bridge. 1) Be courteous of other anglers fishing. Don't run parallel to the bridge too close to the other boats. 2) Be sure to arm yourself with the correct tackle to land a Tarpon around structure. I fish a Penn Battle 7000 with 50lb Fins braid and 60-80lb Berkley Pro Spec fluorocarbon leader. 3) Have a buoy for your anchor. When you hook a Tarpon around structure you have to act fast so having a buoy tied to your anchor makes it easy to just toss your anchor rope over and fight the fish.

There are a couple of different ways to fish the bridge. You can

drift with the tide or you can anchor up tide and float your baits back. It will depend on the tide, moon phase, and availability of baits on which way works best.

Drifting the bridge can be very productive and you can cover a lot of area to locate fish. You can drift a variety of baits. Live threadfins and



pinfish work great, but live blue or pass crabs seem to work best. The key is to allow your bait to look as natural as possible and drift along with the tide. Motor up tide and position the boat to drift between the pilings. Cast your baits off to the side and allow the bait and your boat to drift with the tide. You want your baits to drift as close to the pilings as possible. Once you have



made it through the pilings, reel up and motor back up tide and drift again. An important key, don't motor back up through the set of pilings you want to drift. Motor around a couple of pilings down from the set you want to drift. Also, be courteous of other anglers drifting and don't motor in their set of pilings.



Another very productive way to fish the big bridge is to anchor up tide, cut bait, and chum the tarpon to you. The key here is to have plenty of bait to chum with. I like to cut bait when there are not a lot of fish around. The idea behind using cut bait is to draw the fish to you. The way to go about this is simple. Create a chum slick with the bait you are cutting. When you have a good chum slick going, float cut bait back and let it drift along with your chum. I like to open the bail and feed the line out as your cut bait drifts and when you see the line peeling off, flip the bait over and fish on.



#### BEACH TIPS

There are a few different ways to fish the beach. You can sight fish a school of fish working up or down the beach, you can anchor and wait for fish to pass through, or you can anchor and chum tarpon to you. The important thing to remember, no matter how you choose to target these fish, is to be courteous of other anglers.

If you want to sight fish a school working up or down the beach, find out which way the school is moving and try and set up ahead of the school. You can free line a bait or use a float. Either way will work, but it is up to you to figure what the tarpon want that day. Once the school has passed, motor out around the school and try to set up ahead of the school again. If another boat is working the same school, be sure



to go around and not cut the other boat off.

Another great way to fish the beaches is to anchor and chum up the tarpon. The key is to have plenty of chum and make sure there are fish around. It is very simple. Get a pair of scissors and start cutting. Create a chum line and drift baits along with the other baits and you are sure to hook-up.

#### EGMONT PASS TIPS

Egmont is not the only pass but it is the most popular. Around our new and full moon when the tides get extremely high, pass crabs and blue crabs are flushed out of the back bays and end up at our area passes.



The tarpon are usually preparing to spawn around the moons and are feeding heavily on the crabs. The idea is to drift a crab with the tide and make the bait look as natural as possible. Motor your boat up tide and drift along with the current. When your drift is done, idle back up tide out and around the other boats, and set up for another drift. By doing that, you don't upset other anglers drifting the pass and you won't get a prop full of fishing line. If you are not sure how the drift works, take the time and watch the other boats to see how it is done.

Tarpon fishing can be the most rewarding adventure one day and the most frustrating the next. The key is to be persistent and put the time in to learn the fishery. With a little common sense and courtesy, we can all have a fun and productive year. Good luck landing that fish of your dreams and remember, there's always next year. ■

**Captain Will Shook is a full-time charter captain, fishing all of Tampa Bay since childhood. To book a tarpon charter, call 813-732-5971 or visit [www.TampaFL-FishingCharters.com](http://www.TampaFL-FishingCharters.com).**



## WHAT'S HOT IN AUGUST: SUPPORT LOCAL!

by Captain Justin Searcy

As August rolls in, the Gulf Coast is buzzing with excitement. This month, scallop season is still in full swing, and we're off to a fantastic start. The quantity and quality of scallops this year have been impressive, and many believe it's due to the excellent water quality we've been experiencing.

### Scallop Season Highlights

Scallop season is a favorite time for many anglers and seafood lovers. This year, the waters have been teeming with these delightful bivalves, making it one of the best seasons in recent memory. The improved water quality has played a significant role, providing a healthier environment for scallops to thrive.



Clear waters and abundant seagrass beds have created ideal conditions for scalloping, ensuring a bountiful harvest.

### Captains for Clean Water

The good water quality we're enjoying isn't just by chance. Organizations like Captains for Clean Water have been instrumental in advocating for policies that protect our waterways. Their efforts in promoting clean water initiatives and fighting against harmful discharges have had a positive impact on our marine environments. Supporting such organizations helps ensure that we continue to have healthy waters and vibrant marine life for future generations.

### Catch & Cook: Fresh Scallops

One of the best parts of scallop season is the opportunity to enjoy fresh-caught scallops. These delectable

morsels are not only a thrill to catch but also a joy to cook. There's nothing quite like the taste of scallops you've harvested yourself. They can be prepared in various ways, from simple searing with butter and garlic to more elaborate dishes like scallop ceviche or scallop pasta.

In our effort to support local businesses, I like to incorporate local honey from Bayshore Bees in my recipes. This adds a unique and delicious twist to traditional scallop dishes. For a cool recipe using their honey, check out my Instagram page where I share tips and tricks for turning your scallop catch into a gourmet meal.

### Local Captains & Businesses

In our fishing community, supporting local captains and businesses is essential. They provide invaluable services and expertise that make our fishing experiences richer and more rewarding. One local place I highly recommend for all your fishing gear needs is Boat and Motor Superstores. The folks there are knowledgeable and always ready to offer tips and tricks to enhance your fishing experience.

Before heading out on the water, I often start my day with a hearty breakfast sandwich at Gennaro's in Tarpon Springs. It's the perfect way to fuel up before a long day of fishing, and the friendly atmosphere makes it a great spot to relax and plan your trip.



I also want to give a shoutout to another local fishing crew, my friends at The Poon House. You can pick up their gear at Boat and Motor Superstores. Their products are top-notch

and are quickly becoming a favorite among local anglers. Supporting local businesses like these not only helps our community thrive but also ensures that we continue to have access to high-quality products and expert advice.

### August Fishing Tips

Aside from scalloping, August offers a variety of other fishing opportunities. The warm waters attract species like redfish, snook, and tarpon closer to the shore. Early mornings and late afternoons are prime times to target these fish, as they tend to be more active during cooler parts of the day.

When targeting redfish, try using live bait like shrimp or pinfish. For snook, artificial lures such as soft plastics and topwater plugs can be very effective. Tarpon, on the other hand, often require a bit more patience and skill. Look for rolling tarpon in the early morning and use live crabs or mullet to entice them.

August is a month full of promise for anglers on the Gulf Coast. With scallop season in full swing and plenty of fishing action to be had, there's no better time to get out on the water. Remember to support local businesses and captains, as they play a crucial role in our fishing community. Whether you're harvesting scallops or chasing the big one, enjoy the thrill of the catch and the satisfaction of a successful day on the water.

For more fishing tips, recipes, and updates, be sure to follow my Instagram page. 📌

- Captain Justin Searcy

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This fishing haven invites you to embark on a scalloping expedition that promises both excitement and relaxation. Picture yourself aboard a gently rocking boat, the sea breeze refreshing your senses, as you prepare for an underwater treasure hunt.

With your dive flag raised and snorkel gear ready, plunge into the crystal-clear waters where an underwater paradise awaits. The vibrant marine life, from colorful fish darting through swaying seagrass to delicate sea creatures in their hideaways, sets the stage. But the real stars are the scallops—gleaming jewels on the sandy seabed, just waiting to be discovered by

those with a keen eye and an adventurous spirit.

On Florida's Sports Coast scalloping isn't just about the catch; it's about the camaraderie and shared joy of the experience. Whether with family, friends, or fellow adventurers, the excitement of each discovery is contagious. Back on the boat, the fun continues as you compare your day's haul and recount stories of the scallops that got away.

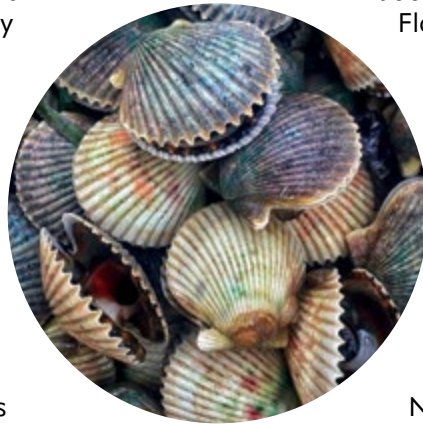
After a successful day on the water, indulge in the freshest seafood Florida's Sports Coast has to offer. Whether you cook your catch or dine at one of the many waterfront eateries, the local culinary scene won't disappoint. Savor fresh seafood dishes, crafted with locally

sourced ingredients and paired with expertly mixed cocktails, as you toast to your unforgettable day on the water.

But there's more to Florida's Sports Coast than scalloping. Explore vibrant downtown areas, venture through lush nature preserves, or simply soak up the sun on the Gulf of Mexico.

No matter your interests, this destination promises a blend of adventure and relaxation.

So why wait? Dive into an unforgettable scalloping adventure on Florida's Sports Coast. Whether you're seeking thrills, relaxation, or a taste of paradise, this coastal gem offers an experience you'll cherish for a lifetime. 🍷



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# LET'S PLAY!





### Captain Sergio Atanes

Hottest month of the year, so the "early or late bird, gets the worm". Look for the best bites to be between daybreak and hour before sunset. Bridge fishing is at its peak, not only for us, but for the fish. Cut bait on the bottom for big redfish and snook on the flats and cut fresh blue crabs for black drum under the are bridges as long as the tide is moving.

Night fishing around the dock lights will produce some oversize trout and snook; try live large shrimp or small greenback sardines. Mangrove Snapper are here and will entertain everyone using live shrimp around artificial reefs and bridges.

### ABOUT THE CAPTAINS

Captain Sergio and Captain George Hastick fish the Florida waters, specializing in and around the West Coast of Florida and Tampa Bay. Their show, Fishing Adventures Florida, is about two captains sharing their knowledge and experience of the local waters. Encouraging others to share in their love of what the outdoors has to offer. Their goal is to educate, entertain and share the experience of fishing opportunities the state has to offer.



### Captain George Hastick

August is typically one of the hottest months but that does not stop the fish from eating, they are just looking to get out of the heat, which they do in several ways. They will get under docks, mangroves, bridges for the shade or they will get into deeper water also. The snook and redfish will be under the docks and mangroves hiding from the sun once it gets high in the air. The speckled trout will be in 5-7 feet of water over grass bottom with sand holes. Cobia and sharks are not bothered by the heat as much and will cruise the flats looking for their next meal but you can also find them out around the range markers and channel markers and when the tide goes slack on the flats head out into the bay!

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# MY MAGIC BAG

by Dave Ulgenalp

What's in your bag, Wader Dave? That is the question I'm asked most often by my charter clients, Instagram followers and anglers attending my presentations. They believe inside my bag lay the secrets to catching more and bigger fish than they ever thought possible – and that very well may be the case. So, let's look inside my magic bag.

What will likely surprise you is how few lures I have in my bag. They are my confidence baits and all fall into one of four lure types; paddle tails, jerk baits, spoons and topwater plugs.



Over time and from season to season, the brands, styles, and colors of these baits may vary, but the categories have remained the same.

**Here's what I suggest you carry in your bag in order of importance:**

- 1) 3-to-4-inch soft plastic paddle tails in white, pearl, glow, slam shady or a similar light color.
- 2) 3-to-4-inch soft plastic paddle tails in new penny, root beer, shad, golden bream or another dark or natural color.
- 3) 3-to-4-inch soft plastic shrimp in glow, natural or a similar color.
- 4) 3-to-5-inch soft plastic jerk bait in white, pearl, glow, slam shady or a similar light color.
- 5) 3-to-5-inch soft plastic jerk bait in new penny, root beer, shad, golden bream or another dark or natural color.
- 6) Three 1/8 oz and 1/4 oz, 3/0 jig heads and three 1/16 oz, 3/0 and 1/8 oz, 4/0 Twist-lock hooks.
- 7) 1/2 oz gold or copper colored weedless spoon.
- 8) 3 1/2 to 5-inch bone or natural colored topwater hard bait.
- 9) One small waterproof container to hold jigs, hooks, spoons, and hard baits.

Intuition might tell you that by limiting lure types and colors, you

are limiting your opportunities to catch fish. However, I think you will find the opposite to be true. By limiting your options to those types and colors of lures I've listed, you will spend less time deciding which lures or colors to use, less time changing baits and more time with your lures in the water.

More time with your lures in the water usually results in catching more fish, and nothing im-

proves your confidence more. Just like me, you will find your favorite lure categories, brands and colors and they will change over time, but don't forget - more isn't always better when it comes to deciding what to carry in your magic bag.

Next month, I will share a list of accessories I recommend that will make you a more productive, comfortable, and safer wade fisherman – don't miss it!

**Dave Ulgenalp, aka "Wader Dave," is Tampa Bay's Premier wade fishing guide. You can find out more about him and book a trip at [www.wadersguide.com](http://www.wadersguide.com) or follow @waderdave on Instagram. Also, be sure to check out the numerous videos he's featured in on SaltStrong.com and YouTube by searching for Wader Dave.**



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# TALES FROM THE OLD GUY

by David Mallory

I asked Captain George if we could do a "40th Wedding Anniversary Fishing Trip." He thought it was a great idea. He told us he would pick us up at the dock at 8:00 AM. As Pauline and I were getting ready to leave home, George called and said he had bait already so we could get to the dock as soon as possible. When we got there, George was waiting. He said the bait had been dying when he was away from the deeper water. We left the dock in a hurry, got on plane and went fast to push more water through the baitwell. That definitely made the bait happy.

Our first stop was a reef that in the past had been very good, but not so good lately. He thought maybe it might contain some hungry fish this morning. He thinks like a fish! The Captain keeps the drag on his reels tight so we don't lose fish in the rocks. Well, I have to tell you, my first fish didn't care! He tore out drag like it wasn't there and I just hung on. George yelled, "Get the pole up and reel!" Did you ever try to reel line in when a fish was pulling line out? It doesn't work! Anyway, I was able to get control and keep the fish from getting into the rocks. The bigger fish know that they can get to the rocks to rub the line against them and break it. We battled back and forth, fish trying for rocks - Dave trying to keep him in clear water. Dave was winning. Finally, we got the fish to the boat and in the net. It was, we thought at first, a gag grouper. After measuring and pictures, back it went to

live another day. The season had not opened yet for them.

Pauline and I were catching a few mangrove snapper and another small grouper. George thought we should go to another small reef.



Pauline caught a black sea bass and not much else so we moved again. This time it was spotted sea trout, many of them and hungry. While there was a lull, George was looking at his phone. He said to me "Dave, that grouper you caught was a black grouper, not a gag. I didn't think it could be because the reef we got him on was shallow and they are a deep water fish. I have NEVER caught one inside the bay before." That was exciting. Good for George for picking that up. I didn't!

After catching many trout and a ladyfish, we moved again. Another flats with many hungry trout and a big stingray, which gave me a very good fight. More trout and Pauline pulled in a red grouper, still out of season, but fun to catch. After more trout, we found another flats

with a reef. There was a guy wearing waders on the other side of the reef, so we knew it wasn't very deep. The trout on this reef were running a little larger, so we were able to keep a few. They are very good to eat and I love to catch them because the coloring and shape remind me of the Brown Trout I used to catch in some Vermont streams in my earlier angling years.

Another move brought us even more hungry trout and some mangrove snapper, another great table fish. Pauline was fishing on the starboard side of the boat and catching fish behind my back. Trout and ladyfish. They give you a great fight and are called "poor man's

Tarpon" because they are silver, fight very hard and jump out of the water a just like a Tarpon.

George said the wind was starting to pick up and it was time to head back. We certainly had a fun day, catching 8 different kinds of fish for a total of 55 fish! One of us caught 29 and the other caught 26. We are usually close in our totals. We keep very close track of every fish, as I have done since 1952, with my father, and Pauline when she joined the family 40 years ago. It's fun to look back to see how things change from season to season. Our 40th Anniversary Fishing Trip turned into another fun day with our Captain. Lots of fish with some to eat; hard to beat that. ☑

Dave can be reached by email at: [David\\_Mallory@msn.com](mailto:David_Mallory@msn.com)

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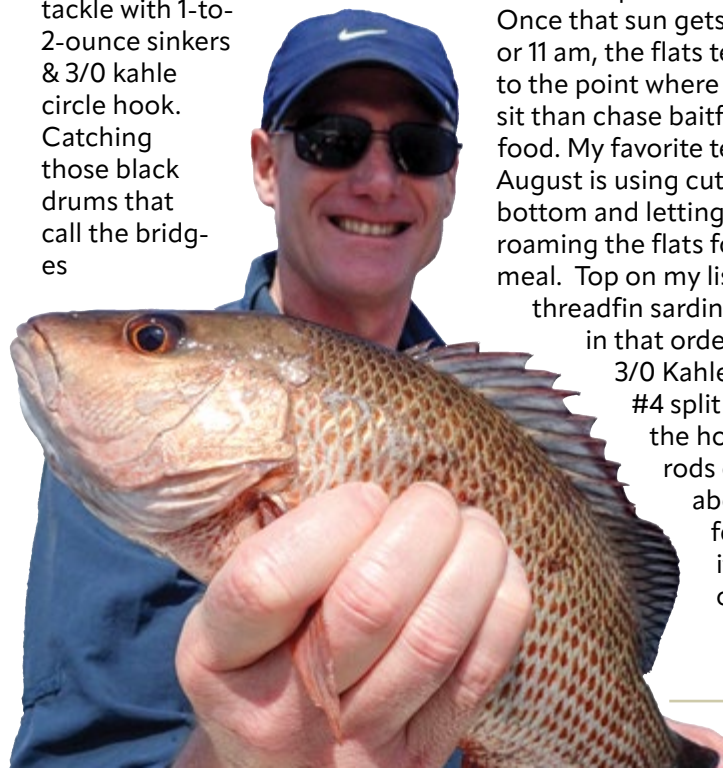
# BEAT THE HEAT & CATCH FISH

by Captain Sergio Atanes

August is one of the hottest months of the year, and therefore not my favorite month for fishing. I would rather do all those "honey do's" I haven't done and work on preparing your fishing tackle for September. However, my mind and body need some time on the water, so I break up my time several ways to accommodate my yearning.

The good part is less traffic on the water, which gives you more room to work on the mangroves and bridges. Here are some ideas on how to make August fishable.

First, start early and quit early or try fishing at night. Bridges are your friend this time of year, giving you cover from the sun and thunderstorms during the day. At night, the bridge lights bring the night critters out to eat like tarpon, redfish, mangrove snapper, snook and big speckled trout. If you want to catch some big boys, try bottom fishing with cut blue crabs on heavy spinning tackle with 1-to-2-ounce sinkers & 3/0 kahle circle hook. Catching those black drums that call the bridg-



es their home during the summer months is a blast and after a few of them on the hook you are worn out in no time. The morning bite starts from daybreak to 10 am with mangrove snapper, snook, trout, jacks, black drum and mackerel. The evening bite is about an hour before sunset and the darker the night, the better the bite as the lights from the bridge bring the baitfish and shrimp to the surface. If your boat has underwater lights, use them as they draw baitfish under the boat which bring the big trout to feed.

Flats are best fished early before water temperatures get too high. Once that sun gets up around 10 or 11 am, the flats tend to warm up to the point where the fish rather sit than chase baitfish around for food. My favorite technique in August is using cut bait on the bottom and letting the big girls roaming the flats for food take my meal. Top on my list is ladyfish, threadfin sardines and pinfish in that order. Use a 2/0 or 3/0 Kahle hook with a #4 split shot just above the hook put as many rods out spaced about 10-to-15 feet apart and let it soak. Sooner or later, that big

redfish or snook will take it. The bad thing is you will catch rays and catfish, its still well worth it.

### Here are a few tips to help occupy your spare time:

- Give your reels a good cleaning by loosening the drags and lubricating the gears. If you do not feel comfortable doing this there are several good tackle dealers in Tampa who can service your reels at a reasonable price.
- Check your line guides on the rods for any scratches or nicks. Use cotton swabs or borrow some pantyhose from your wife when she is not looking and cut it into small strips. It will last a long time, so do not worry, she will not miss one. Now run the cotton swab or piece of pantyhose through the guide. If the pantyhose clings or the cotton sticks to the guide, replace the guide or risk losing a fish later. A slight scratch or cut on the guide will cut your line under pressure from a pulling fish.
- At the end of the day never put your hook on the guide, as this can and will scratch the guide. If your rod doesn't have a hook catcher built in take an electrical nylon tie with a screw hole built in and place it just above the top grip on the rod. This allows a place for the hook to sit.



- Most anglers take too much tackle on a fishing trip. Remember the last time you went on a vacation with your wife, and she brought half the closet along? There are many new small soft sided tackle boxes that can handle all your needs. I suggest you leave most of your tackle at home and replenish your tackle box as needed. In addition, small pill bottles work great for hooks and small sinkers to keep on the console of the boat and use as needed.



Now that all the "honey do's" are done, and your tackle is ready for fishing, remember fishing heats up as the water temperature drops!

The Mangrove Snapper bite is starting to peak and some of the bigger ones can be found on many of the artificial reefs, bridge pilings and rock piles in

Tampa Bay. I use an extra long leader of 20-pound fluorocarbon with either a #1 or 1/0 circle hook, glow bead between the hook and the leader and the lightest sinker I can get away with to keep the bait on the bottom. Small greenback sardines, live shrimp, sandfleas, or fiddler crabs all work well, the bites are going to take place about an hour before the change of tide.

September will bring lower water temperatures and an increase in fish activity. Look for snook cruising the mangrove shorelines; flounder will hit jigs tipped with shrimp or "Fishbites" chunks bounced on the bottom around sand patches on the grass flats. Mackerel action steps up a notch with water temperature starting to drop and redfish will move further out into the flats during high tide look for small crabs & shrimp. ▣

**Captain Sergio Atanes is Host of the Fishing Adventures Florida Show on Waypoint TV, Carbon TV and YouTube. He is owner of Reelfishy.com fishing charters and can be reached by calling 813-973-7132 or by email at: atanes@msn.com.**

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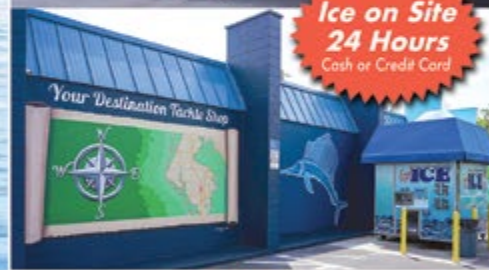


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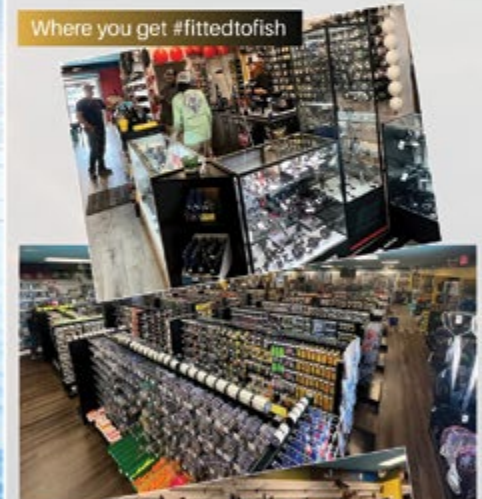
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