

FLORIDA'S COMMUNITY SPORTSMAN'S PUBLICATION

# ONSHORE OFFSHORE Magazine

May 2024



TAMPA BAY  
**Boat  
SHOW**



**FREE**

[onshoreoffshore.com](http://onshoreoffshore.com) | [facebook.com/OnshoreOffshoreMagazine](https://facebook.com/OnshoreOffshoreMagazine) | [instagram.com/onshoreoffshoremagazine](https://instagram.com/onshoreoffshoremagazine)



# WATERFRONT GRILL



**TARPON'S  
LARGEST  
TIKI BAR!**

**HAPPY HOUR  
MON-FRI 3 TO 7  
LIVE MUSIC  
7 DAYS A WEEK**



**DAILY FOOD SPECIALS**



**IF YOU DON'T KNOW  
THE CAPT'N...  
YOU DON'T KNOW  
TARPON!**

**727-944-3346**

21 Oscar Hill Rd - Tarpon Springs  
[www.captainjackstarpon.com](http://www.captainjackstarpon.com)

# TAMPA BAY **Boat** **SHOW**

presented by **Tampa Bay Times**

*The Largest Sales Event  
on the West Coast!*



Tampa Bay's Largest Boat Show and Sale is back! The Tampa Bay Boat Show will be overflowing with watercraft and exhibits for the boating enthusiast.

This is an event you don't want to miss.

Millions of dollars of inventory on display.

The Expo Halls and Grounds are packed with displays.

## June 21, 22, 23

Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday 10am -5pm

### FREE ADMISSION!

### Florida State Fairgrounds

4800 U.S. Hwy. 301, Tampa, FL 33610

### Gulf & Bay Florida Fishing School

Learn from the pros on Friday, Saturday & Sunday

FREE seminars presented by the area's top fishing experts & captains

## New Boats • Watercraft • Exhibits & More!

[www.tampabayboatshows.com](http://www.tampabayboatshows.com) • 727-893-8523

## FISHY FLATULENCE

Those who know me best would certainly verify that I usually try to steer away from discussion of puerile subjects like flatulence, but recent news reports make it imperative for me to bring you up to speed on researchers discovery of fish farts. Apparently a study performed by USF researchers in St. Pete identified several new noises, emanating from the depths, which they felt were best described as tuna toots.

These researchers (almost certainly funded by some sort of huge government grant) sent a robot glider out into the gulf to eavesdrop on the daily lives of our fishy friends. While they did not discover any terrorist threats or make any breakthroughs that would locate the "Undersea Wonders of Atlantis", they did determine that there are a variety of fish species that pass gas producing underwater fart sounds. I can picture it now. Researchers listening to the sound recordings jump from their chairs and shout, "EUREKA, I JUST HEARD A HERRING RIP ONE" while his or her associate breaks out the bubbly to toast their monumental discovery.

Is it possible that this is all just a cruel joke? Did they consider the possibility that it was all just a playful scuba diver with a waterproof case for his iphone who was playing with the Atomic Fart App?

Don't get me wrong, I am a proponent of undersea research that can teach us how to better preserve our fishy resources, but I am not quite sure how fish farts play an integral role in this type of research. The gliders that collect this sort of information cost a lot of money. Some typical base prices of models that I could find on line start at \$120,000 to \$140,000 and go up from there. Researchers and labs don't come cheap either. All I'm saying is that perhaps all of this money could be better spent doing something like teaching wiener dogs to talk or balancing the Federal Budget?

Perhaps this discovery will lead to even more valuable research studies to determine the effect that fish farts are having on the Ozone layer. In recent years the US Government has given nearly 20 million dollars (I am not making this up) in Conservation Innovation Grants to 51 different projects studying the impact of cow farts and belches; fish flatulence will surely be next.

I have to wonder which fish are the most flatulent? Does it depend on their diet or does it vary by species. Does Mrs. Shark tell Mr. Shark, "you have got to stop eating those Blowfish, they give you such terrible gas?" Did they find that young male fish were more likely to sneak up behind their friends and rip a big bubbler? Could they also hear nervous fish giggles after the toots?

A veteran sonar tech from submarine duty said that none of this came as a surprise to him. Apparently the size of Humpback Whales is not the only thing that is monumental about them. 'Thar she blows' may have had more than one meaning to early whalers. It really only makes sense that fish too would have some gas to pass. I can't really see why this is such a big discovery, I realized, many years ago, that my dog farts and you never saw that in the news (till now).

Most of the information in this column is actually true or at least based on truth, which may be slightly embellished for my amusement. This is definitely another instance of when the truth is stranger than anything I could make up. Till next month...

Merle





16



8



30

# ONSHORE - OFFSHORE *Magazine*

Climb aboard a fast-growing publication with proven results and an extremely long shelf life. Distributed in all major markets in Florida, Onshore-Offshore Magazine's exposure spans from coast to coast. Also increase your presence with advertisements on our website. Call today!

**CALL 727.359.3471 FOR PRICING INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST OUR NEW MEDIA KIT.**



**ON THE COVER:** Snook action has been heating-up all around the bay area and this lady angler had a great day on the water with our very own, Captain George Hastick. Check out his article on page 10 of this issue!

## DEPARTMENTS

- 4 MERLE'S MIND**  
Random Thoughts from Merle
- 12 TIDE CHECK**  
Florida West Coast: May 2024
- 24 FISHING FORECAST**  
with Captains Sergio & George
- 28 INDUSTRY NEWS**  
GearRAK

## FISHING

- 8 BO KNOWS TUNA!**  
by Misty Wells
- 10 MAY IS A SLAMMIN' GOOD TIME!**  
by Captain George Hastick
- 20 TALES FROM THE "OLD GUY"**  
by David Mallory
- 26 CATCH MORE & BIGGER FISH - GUARANTEED!**  
by David Ulgenalp
- 30 THE SNOOK BITE IS ON!**  
by Captain Sergio Atanes

## DESTINATIONS

- 22 CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN THE MANATEE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD**  
by Josh Johnson

## FEATURE STORY

- 16 AGAINST THE FLOW.**  
by Captain Clay Eavenson

# DROPTINE PROSHOP

**YOUR FULL-SERVICE ARCHERY SHOP!**

Hunting Accessories | Calls | Treestands | Blinds | Decoys

Indoor 20-Yard Range, Camo Apparel & Archery Accessories including G5 & Grim Reaper Broadheads, Quivers, Stabilizers, Arrow Rests, Sights, Releases & More!



FOLLOW OUR FACEBOOK @DROPTINEPROSHOP FOR GIVEAWAYS AND DEALS FOR THE UPCOMING HOLIDAYS!

HOYT PSE PRIME TENPOINT EASTON GOLD TIP

★ Authorized Dealer for Hoyt, PSE, Prime & Tenpoint Crossbows, Gold Tip & Easton Arrows! ★

Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10am to 6pm & Saturday 9am to 2pm

813.541.7180 | 9918 STATE ROAD 52 | HUDSON, FL 34669  
(About a Mile East of Little Road)

# ONSHORE - OFFSHORE Magazine

## Publisher & Chief Bottle Washer

Sal Liggieri

727.359.3471

sal@onshoreoffshore.com

## Design & Layout



Bryan R. Hudson

616.250.0522

fishbonecreate@icloud.com

www.fishbonecreates.com

## Contributing Photographer

Captain Jimmy Nelson

www.livinthedreamtv.com

## Contributing Writers

Captain George Hastick

Captain Sergio Atanes

Captain Clay Eavenson

Dave Mallory

Dave Ulgenal

Merle Seamon

Josh Johnson

Misty Wells

Report violations of fish or wildlife laws by calling the Wildlife Alert Hotline, 1-888-404-3922, or text the information to Tip@MyFWC.com. Tipsters can remain anonymous and might be eligible for a reward. Protect Florida's waters!



**FOLLOW US  
ON FACEBOOK  
& INSTAGRAM!**

Letters, questions, subscription information and comments can be sent to:

**Onshore-Offshore Publications, LLC**

P.O. Box 861

Tarpon Springs, FL 34688

727.902.3735

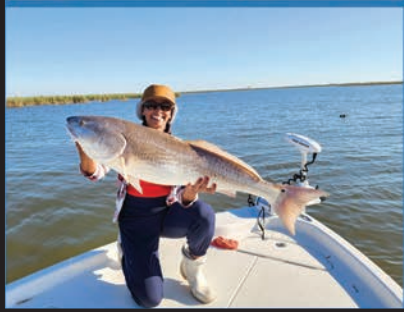
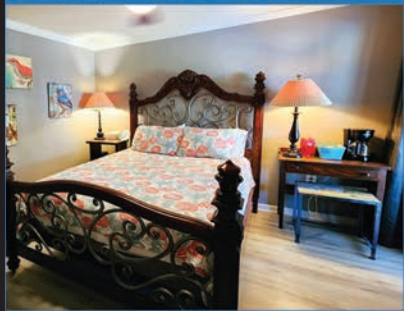
No portion of this magazine may be reproduced without the written consent of the publisher. Onshore-Offshore does not necessarily advocate or agree with the beliefs, expressions or opinions of the writers or advertisers.

## HIDDEN BELOW!

UPF 30+

MORE   
**ART & APPAREL**  
LIKE THIS AT...

# HUNTERSKIPPER.COM



# LeMatidora Inn

Drive or fly into the pearl of Plaquemines Parish, a Sportsman's and Aviation Enthusiast's paradise. Boasting numerous amenities such as our 20,000 gallon saltwater pool, complimentary boat parking, fish cleaning station, ice machine, laundry room and so much more.



504-564-9300 [www.lematidorainn.com](http://www.lematidorainn.com)



Airport Identifier LS84



@lematidorainnlincolnproperties



@lematidorainn

## THE ULTIMATE ROD TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

We created The Ultimate Rod Transportation System because we want anglers to spend more time fishing and less time packing and loading. Easily load, secure, and unload your rods! This system is designed to work well with spinning, conventional, bait caster and even fly outfits, it fits all factory OEM and majority of aftermarket roof racks. To learn more or get yours today visit:

[GEARRAK.COM](http://GEARRAK.COM)



### SAFE & SECURE

Locking mechanism is designed to prevent theft of the fishing equipment while the vehicle is unattended.



### CLAMP & CUSHION

For a tight, yet soft grip keeping your poles firmly in place



### 4 ROD CAPACITY

Our Rod Transportation System can be mounted on the right or left side of the vehicle. Capacity can be increased to 8 rods by adding another rack to the opposite side.

# BO KNOWS TUNA!

by Misty Wells

There are a lot of challenging fish out there to try and catch and Tuna can be one of the most challenging to add to your bucket list. If you're an angler, you have probably watched an episode or 10 of "Wicked Tuna" and like me you probably think, "what's the big deal, I can do that no problem". There are a few Captains in the industry that are well-known for catching certain species like Captain Tommy Laronge; Grouper, Captain Brett Norris-Snook; Captain Lori Deaton; Tarpon and then you have Captain Bo Keough, the "Master of Tuna". When I got the call from Captain Bo to go Tuna fishing off the coast of Orange Beach, Alabama on the oil rigs, I jumped at the chance as I have been waiting for 5 years. Bo said that on this trip we were going to target Blue Marlin and Yellowfin Tuna, also known as "Ahi". If you like Sushi, be excited.

We got to the oil rigs about 2-hours before daylight and started rigging up and getting

the game plan together. Right before the sun started to rise, there were tons of Blackfin Tuna all around the boat, so Tommy and I grabbed some spinning rods rigged with Diamond Jigs to land some live bait for Marlin or Tuna.

The bite was on fire, the minute your jig hit the water it was pretty much "fish on". Tommy and I both cast out at the same time and we both got hooked up and were reeling our fish to the boat and you won't believe what happened next. Just as Tommy had his Blackfin at the back of the boat a huge Bluefin Tuna rose from the depths, turned on it's side like a Tarpon and just inhaled that Blackfin like a he was eating a chicken finger and then disappeared.

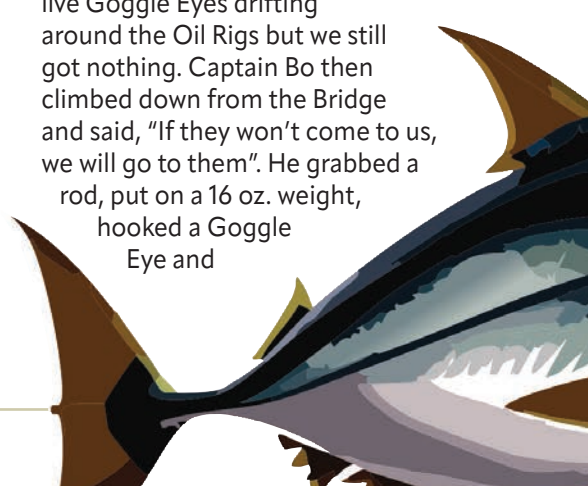
That Tuna had to be over 500 lbs. The Bluefin was so big that it took my breath away. As I backed up on the deck I remember thinking two



things, "we might need a bigger boat" and "if one of those Bluefin bite, I will let Tommy have the rod."

It was time to start fishing, so Kevin and Cory grabbed some handsized Blackfins for live bait and put them on the 80 wide reels with 100 lb. mono with 25-foot 200 lbs. fluorocarbon leader and circle hooks. Based on what we just saw, I thought for sure we were going to land something big, but not much happened.

Captain Bo is not one to sit around and wait, so after an hour we switched it up to Kite fishing with live Goggle Eyes drifting around the Oil Rigs but we still got nothing. Captain Bo then climbed down from the Bridge and said, "If they won't come to us, we will go to them". He grabbed a rod, put on a 16 oz. weight, hooked a Goggle Eye and





dropped it to the 100-foot mark and handed the rod to Tommy and raced back up to the Bridge. Before Bo even made it back up, Tommy yelled, "fish on", like Bo always says, "pay attention and adapt, try everything, that is the key to catching Tuna."

Tommy began fighting the fish standing, but after 45 minutes of that, he had to move to the chair, he had hooked a monster. We are guessing at this point that it must be at least 200 lbs., I am glad Tommy had the rod. He fought that fish "by the book" and did everything right, but after a two-hour battle the fish finally won, it was heartbreaking.

Shortly after that, some Yellowfins showed up and I grabbed an Ocean Born TopWater Flying Pencil-160 SK, Green Mackerel on a large spinning rod and started working it and pretty quickly our luck changed. Tommy and I both landed some nice Yellowfin on those lures;



they are made by a band of anglers and they work well, trust me. Bo was right..."if it is not working, keep working your way through your tackle until it does".

Captain Bo Keough is the current Alabama State Record holder and Gulf of Mexico Record holder for the largest Big Eye Tuna, it weighted 234 lbs. He said he landed it in under two hours and hooked it slow trolling at 4 knots with a Ballyhoo. ☑

Misty Wells, Producer & Host of "Let's Take It Outside" TV show airing to 374 million on Discovery Channel, Bally Sun Sports, Waypoint TV, World Fishing Network, Hunt Channel, MOTV, TCT, Discover Florida Network & Carbon TV.



**POWERING THE BAY**



**MARINE,  
POWERSPORTS,  
AUTOMOTIVE,  
TRUCK & HEAVY  
EQUIPMENT BATTERIES**

A COMPLETE LINE OF  
**CHARGERS & ACCESSORIES**



**DELIVERY  
& SHIPPING  
AVAILABLE**



**HUGE  
INVENTORY**

**NEW MARINE BATTERIES FROM \$59.99**

**DEALER INQUIRIES WELCOME**

**ACDelco**

**MIDTRONICS**

**NOCO genius**  
wicked smart chargers

**Duracell  
Battery Tender**

**DURACELL  
PROCELL**

**FULL MIGHT**

**ODYSSEY**

**Schumacher**

**QUICKCABLE**

**Trojan**  
BATTERY SALES

**OPTIMA**  
BATTERIES

**1600 E. BUSCH BLVD.  
TAMPA, FL. 33612  
813-932-0108**

**10321 DALE MABRY HWY.  
TAMPA, FL. 33618  
813-969-3899**

**WWW.TAMPABAYBATTERY.COM**

# MAY IS A SLAMMIN' GOOD TIME!

by Captain George Hastick

**M**ay is a great month to target a "Grand Slam" in the Tampa Bay area and for those who don't know, its a Snook, Trout, Redfish and Tarpon in one day! Everything in the fishing world has sprung into action in our area; from mackerel, all the way up to the Tarpon and the flats will also be on fire. I like to target Tarpon in the morning or the later afternoon when they seem most active. Look for the larger ones to be on the bridges, passes, beaches and reefs, with the juveniles being more in the backwaters and residential canals. You can fish for them with live and cut bait depending on which method you prefer.

When bottom fishing with cut bait you can get away with a heavier leader in the 100lb range using cut baits like Ladyfish, Threadfin Herring and Shad. I like to freeline or use as little weight as needed to keep that bait on the bottom. Some areas like the Skyway Bridge the current can move too fast to pin it to the bottom, but a popular technique there is to use cut threadfin freelined in the chum slick of cut pieces you are throwing in the water. Let your presentation drift back with your cut pieces you are continually putting in the water. A heavy spinning rod with 30-50lb braid works great for this since you can leave the bail open to drift the bait back until you get the



thump, then you simply close the bail and hold on!

You can also cast live crab, Pinfish, Scaled Sardines or Threadfin at rolling fish or up current along the main bridge pilings and letting your bait drift back with the current next to them which can also draw a strike. Casting live baits into the eddy behind the end piling can also be a deadly tactic.

Now for the rest of your slam. Lets move into the flats to target your Snook, Trout and Redfish. All fish bite better in our area on a moving tide, but Snook and Trout are way more finicky about that than the Redfish are. On an incoming tide, I would target



the Trout first on grassy drop-offs where the tide will start moving first. You can use live Shrimp or Scaled Sardines, but you will cover more ground with soft plastics like a "Bass Assassin Saltwater Lures LIT'L P&V" in Electric Chicken on a ¼ oz jighead. Fan cast and work the area with a twitch hop type of retrieve, usually getting the hit on the sink. If you feel any kind of tap, set the hook.





The Redfish will use the tide and move in with the rising water to get to oyster mounds and the mangrove treelines. Pinfish, Scaled Sardines or Threadfin are good for Redfish, either live or as cut bait. Get casts next to the oyster mounds and close to, if not, under the mangroves. I would use both cut baits in the rod holders while live bait fishing to up your chances. Once you have caught your Redfish, if the tide is still moving, I would go to a cut in the mangroves or any opening in the mangroves and cast live bait into the area where the current will move your bait along the treeline. This is a great natural presentation that gets many Snook hits. If the tide stops, move to the opposite side of the opening to prepare for the outgoing tide. Snook will have their feedbags on and you just have to be in the right place. Now make that same presentation with your live bait letting the current drift it along the mangroves and be ready for the thump! In the meantime, don't forget to put out some large cut baits. Large Snook are lazy and the scent of a large cut bait draws big Snook in!



I hope this helps get you your "Grand Slam" or at least your 'slam' of Snook, Trout and Redfish! 🎣

**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).

# LIONESS SPORTFISHING

**ST. CROIX USVI**

- ✓ Fish Aboard Our 42ft Viking Sportfisher or Our 34ft Avanti Center Console!
- ✓ No Passports are Needed!
- ✓ Cheap Airfare!

**CONSISTENTLY PUTTING OUR CLIENTS ON QUALITY FISH!**

**BOOK YOUR TRIP TODAY! 941.730.7474**

**Have You Got An Old Boat?**

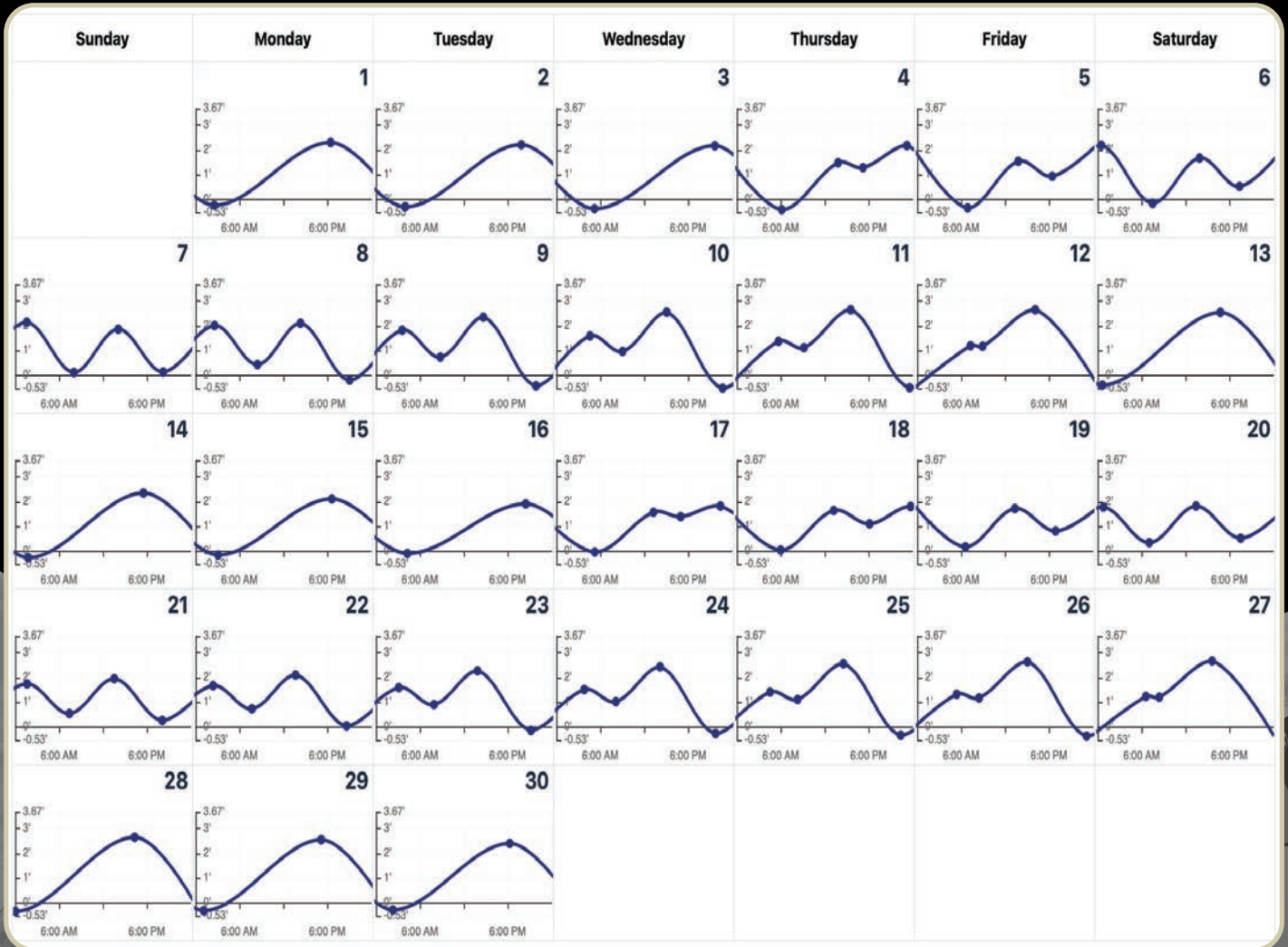
**Need the room for something newer?**

**Don't dare delay, Donate It Today!**

**Call Us At 800-227-2643**

**BoatAngel**

[www.boatangel.com](http://www.boatangel.com)



Conversions are based off of the St. Petersburg Pier. They are published strictly for reference and are not designed for navigational aid. Onshore-Offshore assumes no responsibility for their accuracy.

**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

Destination for  
Outdoor Entertainment



LIVE ON



FISHING ADVENTURES FLORIDA



HOST: Capt. Sergio Atanes • CO-HOST: Capt. George Hastick

Catch it Free on

WAYPOINT TV  
The destination for outdoor entertainment

AnglingTV



CARBONTV



**FWCFR** FLORIDA WEST COAST  
FISHING REPORT



HOST: Capt. Sergio Atanes • CO-HOST: Capt. George Hastick



LIVE MONDAYS!

7:00 PM – 8:00 PM



*Inshore & Offshore*  
**CHARTERS**

**Just Fish**

**(727) 251-3152**



[www.JustFish1.com](http://www.JustFish1.com)



[info@JustFish1.com](mailto:info@JustFish1.com)



**Schedule our  
service today!**

**727-251-6087**

[WWW.BERNHARDTBRAD@YAHOO.COM](mailto:WWW.BERNHARDTBRAD@YAHOO.COM)

**FREE  
Estimates**



**FAST  
FREINDLY  
SERVICE**



- Landscaping
- Irrigation
- Tree Work
- Pool service & repairs
- Flooring
- Windows & Doors
- Handyman
- Screens and enclosures



Feel the Wind™



**HIGH POWER**

**115-250HP**

Tohatsu offers the best outboard motors, including the 250 hp, 225 hp, 200 hp, 150 hp, 140 hp and 115 hp.

**MID-RANGE**

**25-90HP**

Tohatsu offers an outstanding line up of four stroke outboard motors, including the 90 hp, 75 hp, 60 hp, 50 hp, 40 hp, 30 hp and 25 hp outboard motors.

**PORTABLE**

**2.5-20HP**

Our first priority when developing these engines was to make them lightweight and compact without compromising reliability or the quality performance associated with the Tohatsu brand name.

**FIVE-YEAR WARRANTY**

**TOHATSU 100% FINANCING PROGRAM Now Available**



**BEST PRICING GUARANTEED!**

**GULF COAST #1 REPOWER SPECIALIST SINCE 1990**

**12330 49th Street N, Clearwater, FL 33762 • 727-327-7341**

8:30am - 5:00pm Mon - Wed / 8:00am - 4:00pm Thurs & Fri

**www.northeastmarine.net**



**NORTHEAST  
MARINE**

*Against t*





# the flow.

by Captain Clay Eavenson



I made a conscious effort last year to not fish the “popular spots” for tarpon; at least I avoided those spots as much as possible. In fact, I only cut bait one time at

Bean Point all season and that lasted about 1 hour before my clients asked if we could go somewhere else. It wasn't that we hadn't been catching fish, alongside everyone else, for the previous several years. It just got crowded and stressful; even when we were catching fish.

Maybe I'm just getting old or maybe my definition of success has changed throughout the years, but at this point in my life, I'd rather hook a couple of Tarpon, than 20 Tarpon if I can do it all alone. There's just something special about not following the pack and going against the flow.

So, last year I decided I was going to do things differently. I was going to watch everyone head one direction in the morning, but I was going to head the other. I was going to watch everyone else throwing the net, while I skipped that and just rolled out with a dozen crabs. I was going to work hard at finding my own fish, while every-

one else flocked to the massive schools of tarpon. Even if it was just schools of 5-10 fish, as opposed to the thousands that school up at Anna Maria on the big tides, I was determined to avoid the crowds. I wasn't sure how it would work out, but you know what? We had a blast all Summer long and we caught tons of fish.



We didn't have a lot of 20 fish days last Summer, but, we also didn't have any of those days where we were passing off rods to other boats, working our lines under boats to try not to get broke off, or having other people's fish get tangled up in our lines. It was peaceful,

exciting and it was successful. It was the way Tarpon fishing was meant to be. Just you and the fish.

I'd love to say that I figured this all out on my own, but I didn't. Long time Tarpon guides like Jim Lemke, Glen Taylor and Tommy Ziesmann have been preaching this style of contrarian Tarpon fishing to me for years and I was absorbing it but, until last year, I really hadn't put it into practice.

You wanna know the secret that they had spent years trying to drill into me? Well,



here you go. There are fish everywhere in the Tampa Bay area from May through the end of July; not just where the other boats are. There are fish up in the bay, around the bridges, in the passes, on the beaches, in the ICW, in canals, in marinas... all Summer long. Of course they move around with the tide and the bite changes with the tide as well, but you can find fish on your own every single day if you really look and put your time in. Also, you don't need a school of

1,000 fish to hook a bunch of fish. All you need is 10 schools of 10 fish to wear yourself out. You can hook just as many fish out of 10 pods of 10 fish as you can out of 3 herds of 1,000 fish, if you fish them right and you can most likely do it by yourself, because everyone else will flock to the big herds of fish.



There's nothing wrong with the party type of atmosphere of fishing around a bunch of folks. In fact, at times it can be exciting. When you hook up, everyone gets

excited and starts cheering anglers on and it really is like a big party. There are tons of fish at those well known spots and when the bite is on, it's really on, however, I think for the next several years, my clients and I will be going against the flow and chasing after those fish that are typically



left alone in search of that one bite that will make our day. There won't be the cheer of the crowd when we hook up, but oh how we'll enjoy hearing the drag sing and sound of the splash of the "Silver King" as it hits the water. ▣



**Captain Clay Eavenson**  
813.300.2147  
reservations@captainclay.com  
www.captainclay.com

# 31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL LOWER KEYS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DOLPHIN TOURNAMENT



The Florida Keys  
& Key West  
... come as you are<sup>®</sup>



**JUNE 7th, 8th & 9th, 2024**

**OVER \$35,000 IN CASH & PRIZES**

KOA Sugarloaf Key 251 State Rd 939, FL 20 — Friday, June 7th, Registration, Appetizers, & Cash Bar at 5:00 p.m. Sunday, June 9th, Dinner & Awards Ceremony 6 p.m. \*See Official entry form for all rules and info.

**LARGEST DOLPHIN OVER 50 LBS. WINS \$20,000**

First 50 Boats to register are eligible for the \$20,000\*

Fees: (Entry & Banquet for 4) \$500 per boat if received by May 31st, 2024

\$550 after that date. Banquet : (Food Only) \$25/per person

For more information, contact: The Lower Keys Chamber of Commerce

(305) 872-2411. Applications for download at [www.lowerkeyschamber.com](http://www.lowerkeyschamber.com)



Big Pine Key Resort  
A COVE RESORT



DESTINATION  
FLORIDA KEYS & KEY WEST



## TALES FROM "THE OLD GUY"

by Dave Mallory

Last December, we traveled to Palm Beach to catch an Atlantic sailfish. This month, we are off to Mexico for a Pacific sailfish. Generally, we are talking about the same thing but there are some differences. The Pacific sailfish is usually larger and often has some yellow colors on the side. Other than that, they are about the same.

In 1967, Tom and I started a Phillips 66 distributorship in South Burlington, Vermont. Phillips had three filling stations in the Burlington area and wanted somebody to supply and run them. We had to buy tires, batteries and oil products from Phillips, sell the products to the stations, find dealers to run them and create new business by having stations and other businesses switch to us. Neither Tom nor I had any idea how to do that! We decided I would fill the sales position and Tom would do the office work. That was fine by me. I would be on the road selling product to our stations, going back to the office/warehouse, loading the orders and delivering the product. When all that was done, I would go on the road to get new business. Tom would help with the orders and delivering when he could. We had bought a Chevy van for the delivering and a Plymouth wagon to help with deliveries and for me to use drumming up new business and for my "company car".

We grew quickly, in spite of ourselves. We changed a Texaco station to Phillips, got the Avis rental business, and got a large construc-

tion company to buy our product. In three years we changed quite a few stations over to Phillips and sold enough Purolator oil filters to win a free trip to Acapulco, Mexico. Two of our dealers qualified to go also. In those days, Acapulco was beautiful and quite safe.

Tom was not into fishing, but I was. I chartered a captain for the next day and took our two dealers along. We flipped a coin to set the order we would take the bites. Butch won and got set for the first bite. The mate



rigged three lines, two on outriggers, and one on a down-rigger with a live ballyhoo. The two outriggers had large plugs that stayed on the top. After he had Butch sit in the fighting chair, we started trolling and a large fish came up to one of the outriggers and slapped it. The mate said it was a sailfish. Unfortunately, he didn't take the bait. We kept trolling and a dolphin came up to the down-rigger and ate the ballyhoo. Butch had a good fight on his hands and got the fish to the boat. After some pictures, the fish went back into the water. The mate said it was a mahi-mahi which were really good to eat, but we didn't have a way to prepare it. What beautiful colors on the fish! Bright blue, yellow and all iridescent.

Next was my turn. I got in the chair and waited. A few minutes later I had a big sailfish grab the bait and jump four times while I was just trying to hold on, praying it would stay hooked! He jumped six more times

before I got him to the boat, after 23 minutes! The mate leaned over and gaffed him and said they would keep it, cut off the bill for me and send me some of the meat. Yeah, right! Bud was next. He caught a smaller dolphin, but still beautiful. The mate kept it to eat

We got back to shore, took the smaller dolphin to the mates cooler and brought my fish to get weighed and measured. It weighed 122 pounds and was eight feet ten inches long, about twice as big as my Atlantic sailfish. It was the biggest fish I had ever caught and still is! The Captain cut off the bill and took it to mark everything on it. After we had pictures taken, marked the length and weight on the bill he gave it to me. The rest of our trip was enjoyable. We went sightseeing in the countryside and some people waved us into their home. They couldn't speak English and we couldn't speak Spanish, but we had fun with them and had a Mexican beer. We might not feel safe doing that today.

We decided to tour the countryside to see more of the sights. It was all quite bare, so we thought we would head back to the hotel, have a beer and check the beautiful beach. We walked the beach for a bit, seeing many vendors selling everything we could imagine: watches, bathing suits, shirts and beads. We escaped for another day without a purchase!

We enjoyed our last dinner and drinks together, packed, and went to bed to prepare for the journey home the next day. (Did I get any of the meat from the sailfish? Are you kidding? Of course not!).

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

DESIGNED BY WOMEN FOR WOMEN!

**WOMEN'S BOAT APPAREL & ACCESSORIES**

- For the bold & spirited
- UPF 50+ sun protection
- Flattering feminine styles
- Eco-friendly recycled fabrics

BOATBITCHAPPAREL.COM

MAGAZINE EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNT:  
10% OFF ENTIRE PURCHASE WITH CODE: FISH10

IG: @BOATBITCHAPPAREL

**UnReel Fishing Adventures**

"ORIGINAL" Extreme Offshore Charter

Capt. Tommy LaRonge

Full Day Half Day

833.284.fish(3474)  
www.ucatchfish.com

34' Sea Vee Triple 300's

**Get Hooked**

NOW ALMOST WATERFRONT RESTAURANT & BAR

Come by Boat! Lots of Boat Parking Available! And, as Always, the Food is Fresh!

**727.862.8592**

14333 Crabtrap Court | Hudson, FL

**S & M**  
Truck World, Inc.

We Carry a Full Line of Truck Accessories!

Check Out Our Tires & Wheels!

**727.724.3437**  
2870 Gulf To Bay Blvd.  
Clearwater, FL 33759

License # EC13004626

**HI, WE WANT TO BE YOUR ELECTRICIAN!**

We want you to have access to Professional Electricians that you can trust and have total confidence in them to handle anything Electric in your home. Our Expert Electricians are all Highly Trained as well as Background Checked and Drug Tested for your peace of mind.

**Up Front Pricing**      **Fully Licensed and Insured**  
**Financing Available**      **Over 1,600 Great Reviews**

**FREE SERVICE CALL WITH REPAIR \$49 VALUE!**

Coupon must be presented at time of service. Not valid with any other offers. Restrictions may apply. Offer expires 02/28/2024.

**100% Satisfaction Guarantee**

★★★★★  
"This is the third time we have used Red Royal Electric. They were prompt, very professional, easy to work with, and efficient. We would definitely use them again"  
- Yeal S.

WARRANTY 3 YEAR WARRANTY

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS A+ THE SEAL.COM License Insurance Criminal Check

RED ROYAL ELECTRIC

Call Now For FAST Service **855.893.8658**

# CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN THE MANATEE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

Discover How Conservation Efforts in the Crystal River Area Impact Fish, Wildlife and More!  
by Josh Johnson

As the Manatee Capital of the World, Crystal River takes great pride in being at the forefront of manatee and local ecosystem conservation. These continued efforts help ensure these gentle giants have adequate food sources and a safe refuge yearly from November to early April.

Healthy ecosystems in the Crystal River area greatly benefit us all. Here are two ways you can help take part.



## Practice Responsible Boating

A recent study by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission shows that only 4% of observed adult manatees show no sign of watercraft-related scars. As



you can tell by this staggering statistic, boats pose one of the single largest dangers to manatees' health and safety.

When posted regulations and signage are not followed, this can physically harm both manatees and their feeding

grounds. For these reasons, it's essential to follow all posted signs and listed regulations and ensure responsible boating is practiced at all times.

Other responsible boating practices include wearing polarized sunglasses during boat operations and observing all manatee speed zones and caution areas.

So whether you're enjoying a sunny day on the water or hunting for your next catch before the sun rises, please remember to practice your manatee manners!

## Catch and Release

Unsustainable fishing practices threaten local ecosystems and their resiliency in a few ways. Primarily this happens through overfishing and, in turn, habitat de-

struction. Habitat destruction not only impacts the quality of fishing but also directly impacts manatees and their ability to thrive here.

Groups in the Crystal River area, like Save Crystal River, have spent time and resources breathing new life into the local ecosystem by planting fresh eelgrass and combating harmful invasive species. And because of this, habitats in the area continue to grow and thrive! Now it's up to all of us to keep them that way.

Besides curbing potential habitat destruction, catch-and-release fishing also improves native fish populations. How? Because it ensures that more fish remain and reproduce in the ecosystem. This practice allows anglers to enjoy the bounty of fish in the Crystal River area while increasing their chances of successfully catching fish.

Practicing catch and release of native fish also ensures that the opportunity to enjoy this national pastime and recreational opportunity will be around for many years!

## Conservation in the Crystal River Area

As you can see, there are many ways for you to engage in conservation efforts. If you're interested in discovering more about the continued progress being made by conservationists and eco-tourists alike, we have created a Conservation Hub filled with more information. Topics include how to be involved, from the comfort of your home to a deep dive into the invasive aquatic species that threaten the local ecosystem. There's a wealth of knowledge ready for you! ☑

Learn more at [DiscoverCrystalRiverFL.com/Manatee-Conservation](http://DiscoverCrystalRiverFL.com/Manatee-Conservation).





# SUNSHINE SKYWAY FISHING PIERS

The Worlds Largest Fishing Piers

TEACH A KID TO FISH  
We're Catching Fish  
24-Hours a Day!



BAIT & TACKLE IS SHOP OPEN 24/7!

NORTH PIER  
727.865.0668

SOUTH PIER  
941.729.0117

## YOUR FAMILY OWNED TREE SERVICE FOR OVER 20 YEARS!



LET US HANDLE YOUR DANGEROUS TREES!  
TREE REMOVAL · TRIMMING · STUMP GRINDING · STORM CLEAN-UP

352.596.1333 • 866.872.5888

VISA MERCHANT DISCOVER WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS



## A-AMERICAN SELF STORAGE

### NORTH PORT LOCATION

Covered and Uncovered Auto/Boat & RV Parking  
4960 Trott Circle | North Port, 34287

### LAKELAND LOCATION

Uncovered Auto/Boat & RV Parking  
1019 Triangle Street | Lakeland, 33805



813.766.9166 | AMERICANSTORAGEFLORIDA.COM

# Step Into AWARENESS!



DISCOVER  
**CRYSTAL RIVER**  
FLORIDA  
FLORAL CITY || HOMOSASSA || INVERNESS

As the manatee capital of the world we take conservation seriously. Learn how you can play an active role in our efforts at [DiscoverCrystalRiverFL.com/Manatee-Conservation](http://DiscoverCrystalRiverFL.com/Manatee-Conservation).





### Captain Sergio Atanes

Finally, some great weather has arrived and warmer waters mean plenty of Spanish Mackerel have invaded Tampa Bay. Mangrove Snapper are staging around bridge pilings and rocky bottom. Snook are getting ready for spawning, so the big girls are out on the flats. By the end of the month, most will be around passes going into the Gulf of Mexico. Live bait is the key here with Pinfish or Greenbacks being your best baits. Live medium-sized Shrimp on a Banana Jig are super for Mangrove Snapper and Pompano around bridges.



### Captain George Hastick

May is the month of opportunity for fishing in the Tampa Bay area. Tarpon will be one of the top targets this month along the beaches and bridges. There will still be some Kingfish and Sheepshead around. Snook, Trout and Redfish will be great targets fishing the flats and mangrove shorelines. Look for Mackerel to be nearshore, to way up in the bay around the range markers and the many artificial reefs that are marked on the charts. Mangrove Snapper will also be on the reefs and the bridges. Sharks will also be a fun target and can be found from the flats to deeper water and around some of the range and channel markers.

### 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.



## "TACKLE TALK"

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY FLORIDA FISHING OUTFITTERS

### Lee Fisher Sports Joy Fish Pinfish Trap

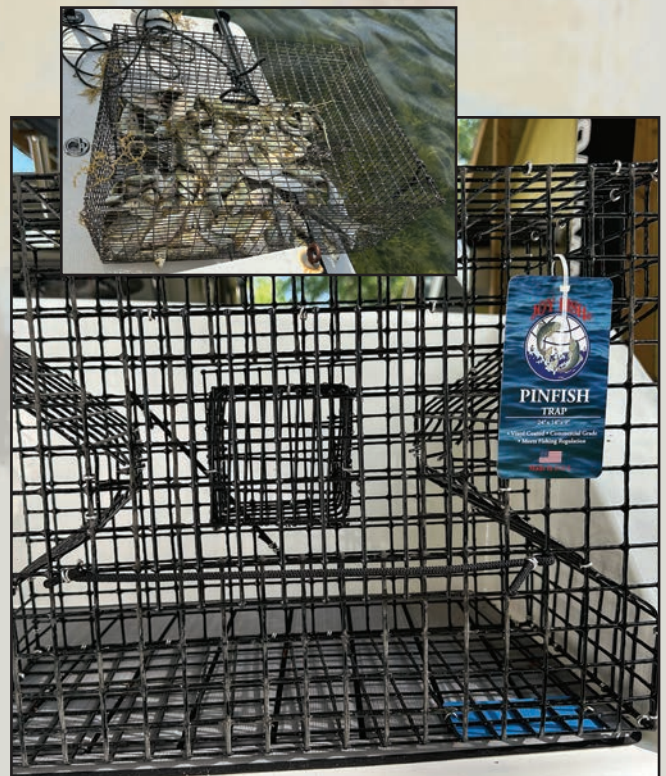
Targeting big fish requires a hearty live bait like a Pinfish and The Joy Fish Pinfish Trap is a great tool for catching them in brackish or murky water.

It includes 4 openings (2 on each side) for the baitfish to enter and you can tie your rope to one of the top corners for easy retrieval.

#### Other Features Include:

Commercial grade construction with a 1" x 1" square mesh black vinyl coated wire and pre-attached baitwell. Bungee latched door for easy access!

**Page sponsored by Tarpon Fishing Outfitters, St. Pete Fishing Outfitters, Tampa Fishing Outfitters and Lakeland Fishing Outfitters. Learn more about each location and shop online at: [www.FIFishingOutfitters.com](http://www.FIFishingOutfitters.com).**







**YOUR OUTBOARD SERVICE SPECIALIST!**

Yamaha | Mercury | Johnson | Evinrude

**GENERAL MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS**

Pumps • Lighting • Plumbing • Electrical Rewiring

**CUSTOM RIGGING & ELECTRONICS**

Custom Panels • Switches • Dash Panels

**REBUILDS, LOWER UNIT REPAIRS & INSTALLS**

New & Used Motor Sales and Installations

**813.967.7102**

4812 NORTH HALE AVENUE | TAMPA, FL 33614

**"Let's Take it Outside"**  
Outdoor.Adventure.Tv

Steam Free 24/7 on Demand

Discovery GO WAYPOINT OUTDOORS TV CARBON TV

The Place to Stay & Play Fish on The Nature Coast



Find southern hospitality with Florida charm on the Gulf of Mexico. 1 1/2 hours west of Orlando where you can find a truly relaxing resort experience away from all the hubbub, at a price that's friendly to your budget. Plantation on Crystal River features rare natural treats and access to what real Florida has to offer on the beautiful Nature Coast.



- World-class inshore, offshore, freshwater fishing, and snorkel for scallops
- Catch Trophy Tarpon, Snook, Gag Grouper, Redfish, Sea Trout, and Red Snapper
- Tie you boat up outside your lodging or rent a boat on-site
- Fine resort accommodations and golf villas
- 27 holes of golf, Florida style
- Kayak the pristine waters of Crystal River
- Dive and swim with the gentle manatees
- Pamper yourself at our premium spa
- 4 restaurants on the grounds, for drinks, dining, and fun
- 12,000 sq. ft. of function space for weddings or meetings

**PLANTATION**  
on Crystal River

Visit our website for savings on special themed packages and adventures or call us at  
**(800)632-6262**

9301 W. Fort Island Trail, Crystal River, FL 34429  
www.PlantationOnCrystalRiver.com



# CATCH MORE & BIGGER FISH – GUARANTEED!

by Dave Ulgenalp

**W**elcome to the first in a series of articles that will have you catching more and bigger Trout, Redfish and Snook than you're catching now – I guarantee it!

Does it sound like one of those “too good to be true” scams? Well, let me make it sound even more like a scam, because not only will you be catching more and bigger fish, you’ll do it in less time, with less gear and almost certainly for less money than you’re spending now on fishing.

**Do I have your interest? Do you want to know the secret? If so, please read on.**

The secret is wade fishing. It’s been my passion for over 40 years! I have been targeting trout, redfish and snook along the coast of Florida from Fernandina Beach to Pensacola since 1981. Over that time, I’ve fished from piers, bridges, boats, kayaks, and SUPs, with an overwhelming majority of that time spent wade fishing. Not because it’s been my only option but because it’s proven to be my most effective option for catching the most and largest fish inshore.

I’ve been a professional wade fishing guide since 2001, have written numerous articles on wade fishing and more recently, been a featured fishing coach and regular content provider for the #1 fishing club for inshore saltwater anglers, Salt Strong ([www.saltstrong.com](http://www.saltstrong.com)). I am also on the pro staff and or a brand am-

bassador for Mirrolure, Simms, Danco Pliers, Smith Optics and Allen Fly Fishing. Most importantly, I’m on the water wade fishing, more than two hundred days a year. There’s no stealthier way to get a cast at the pressured and spooky fish that inhabit the shallow inshore waters from Texas to the Carolinas, than by getting in the water and wading where they live. You can fish spots that are inaccessible to boaters and kayakers, and where fish are less pressured and spooky. The evidence of these claims will lie at your feet as the fish will literally be swimming between them. Sight fishing opportunities are a common occurrence.

While it might seem counterintuitive, you can wade fish in conditions that are unsuitable or even dangerous for boaters and kayakers. You can almost always find a spot to wade fish that is protected from the strongest of winds, regardless of direction or that will hold fish in the most extreme temperatures. Without the need to trailer and or launch a boat or kayak and little cleanup or maintenance to worry about, a wade fishing trip can be completed in much less time, which will allow you to spend more time fishing and to fish more often.

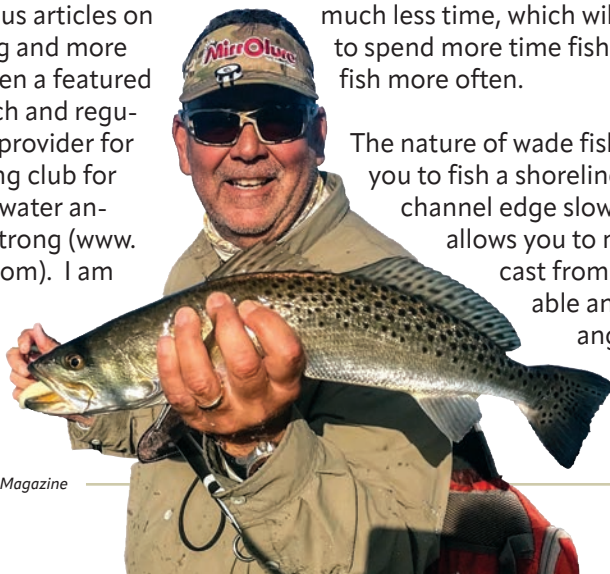
The nature of wade fishing forces you to fish a shoreline, flat or channel edge slowly and allows you to make every cast from a comfortable and effective angle. You will become intimate-

ly familiar with the bottom structure of areas you wade and see exactly what structure holds the fish. You’ll also be able to identify the areas that lack fish holding structure and on future trips, either skip those areas or work them quickly while focusing on the areas you know from experience to hold fish. I’ll warn you, wade fishing is not only effective, but it can also be highly addictive and may lead to you selling your boat, kayak or SUP and saving you thousands of dollars. Even if you don’t become a wade fisherman exclusively, there’s no doubt that learning how to become a good wade fisherman will make you a better boat and or kayak fisherman.

In following articles, I’ll be sharing all that I know about wade fishing, including the necessary gear and tackle, what makes for a great wade fishing spot, how to find those spots and the strategies and tactics you’ll need to catch more and bigger trout, redfish and snook while wade fishing.

Be sure to tune in next month to start learning how you can start catching more and bigger fish – **GUARANTEED!** 🎣

**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.**

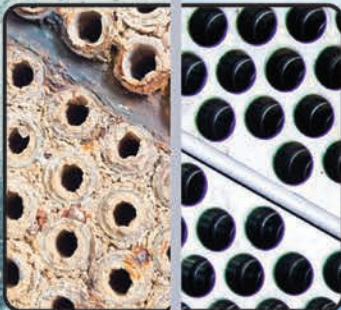




**BLAST AWAY  
SCALE &  
BUILD-UP IN  
PIPES**



**CLEAN AC,  
ENGINE, AND  
GENERATOR  
SYSTEMS**



**DISSOLVE  
CALCIUM  
& MARINE  
DEPOSITS**



# TAME YOUR RAW WATER SYSTEMS

## WITH NEW MARINE DESCALING FLUID

New Marine Descaling Fluid by Star brite safely and quickly **busts through scale, salt, and calcium deposits** in raw water-cooled systems, **maximizing power** at a fraction of the cost of similar products.

When your raw water system is barnacled with deposits, it can cause your engine to run hot or result in AC system inefficiencies by restricting water flow. A simple recirculation of Marine Descaling Fluid can **remedy these unseen overheating issues** without a costly repair. Plus, it won't damage seals, gaskets, or rubber impellers.

**Find this perfect DIY solution in stores nationwide. Available in concentrate and ready-to-use.**

**Visit [www.STARBRITE.com](http://www.STARBRITE.com) to learn more.**



# Elevate Your Fishing Adventures with GearRAK

## The Ultimate Companion for Angling Success

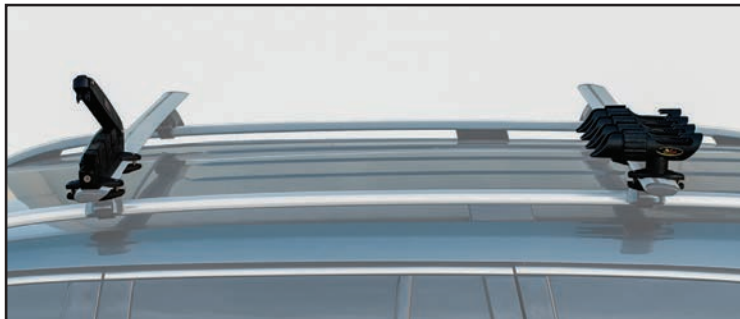
For many outdoor enthusiasts, there's nothing quite like the thrill of a successful fishing trip. However, before you can cast your line and reel in the big one, you need to overcome the logistical challenges of transporting your gear. Enter GearRAK – your indispensable partner in the pursuit of angling excellence.

GearRAK isn't just another rod transportation system; it's a game-changer that revolutionizes the way you carry your fishing equipment. Crafted with precision engineering and meticulous attention to detail, GearRAK ensures that your rods and reels arrive safely and securely at your fishing destination.



At the heart of GearRAK's design are its re-designed rod holder tubes, equipped with locking rings to keep your gear firmly in place. Whether you're navigating rough terrain or cruising down the highway, GearRAK's robust construction guarantees that your equipment remains stable and protected from damage.

But GearRAK offers more than just reliability – it's a catalyst for angling success. With its versatile design, GearRAK accommodates a wide range of fishing setups, including spinning reels, bait casters, and fly rods. This adaptability means that no matter your preferred fishing style, GearRAK has the flexibility to meet your needs.



What sets GearRAK apart is its compatibility with most stock and aftermarket roof racks. Whether you have a factory-made roof rack or have upgraded to an aftermarket option, GearRAK seamlessly integrates, providing a hassle-free solution for transporting your fishing gear.

Of course, the ultimate goal of any fishing trip is to reel in the big catch. GearRAK's commitment to excellence extends beyond its construction;

it's a tool designed to enhance your angling experience from start to finish. By simplifying the transportation process, GearRAK allows you to focus your energy on what matters most – catching fish.

In the world of fishing, success is measured not just by the quantity but by the quality of your catch. GearRAK's unwavering reliability and commitment to excellence set the stage for anglers to achieve unparalleled triumphs on the water. With GearRAK by your side, every fishing expedition becomes an opportunity for greatness.

But GearRAK isn't just about functionality – it's about empowering anglers to pursue their passion with confidence. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a novice angler, GearRAK provides the support you need to elevate your fishing adventures to new heights.

So why settle for anything less? Equip yourself with GearRAK and experience the difference for yourself. From the moment you set out on your fishing journey to the exhilarating moment you reel in that trophy fish, GearRAK will be there every step of the way, ensuring that your angling experience is nothing short of extraordinary.

**Visit [GearRAK.com](http://GearRAK.com) to get yours today. 🗑️**



**KAKU**  
KAYAKS &  
SUPs

THE  
ALL NEW  
**ZULU**  
IGUIDE

WWW.KAKUKAYAKS.COM



**EXPLORE THE  
DEWALT SUPERSTORE  
FOR 2 QUICK & EASY WAYS  
TO WIN!**  
DEWALT BRAND MERCH, GIFT CARDS & MUCH MORE



SCAN FOR A  
CHANCE TO WIN

DEWALT • STANLEY • BLACK+DECKER  
IRWIN TOOLS • PORTER CABLE • AND MORE

**HWGA**  
SUPPLY  
DEWALT SUPERSTORE

**THE BIGGEST DEWALT STORE YOU'VE EVER SEEN**  
910 SE 14TH PL, CAPE CORAL, FL 33990 • OFF DEL PRADO NEAR CC HOSPITAL  
**HWGASUPPLY.COM** **CALL (239) 224-9107**

# THE SNOOK BITE IS ON!

by Captain Sergio Atanes

**M**ay is the time of year that Mr. Snook, aka the "Salt-water Bass", makes his debut; coming out from the creeks, rivers and marina basins ready to eat anything insight. And, when this happens, the bite depends on the water temperature, so it could be anytime from now till mid-April, but rest assured, it will happen.



Snook are creatures of habit and if you've done your homework (keeping a fishing log) over the years of "when-where & how," you will have a good idea where to start. If not, here's some food for thought.

Early May, look for Snook around the mouths of rivers. The Little Manatee River is a good Snook spot and you will find them staged up around the bends where the water flow has formed some deep holes. They will sit and wait for the bait as it is pushed by the tide. The



start of the outgoing tide has been most productive for me. Double Branch is another hot spot in May, because as the water rushes out all the bait fish and small crabs along the oyster bars become a feeding ground for Snook and nice Redfish.

As the weather warms in mid-April or later, they will make their way to the mangrove flats, fattening up for mating season, which starts around the first full moon in May.

### TECHNIQUES & TACTICS

Fishing the mouths of rivers or creeks, I prefer to use medium-sized live shrimp freelined, unless the current is strong, then I will put a #4 split shot about eight inches above the hook to slow the drift of the shrimp. Cast up current and let the shrimp drift into the deeper water and continue to feed line allowing the shrimp to act naturally until it passes the bend.

By May, the Snook should have made their way to the mangrove flats to start feeding on live Scaled Sardines (*Greenbacks*) getting aggressive on their bite. Don't overlook any structure like exposed rocks or around oyster beds, as they tend to radiate heat quicker and warm the water around them, which acts like a magnet for Snook. Cool water slows their bite, and they prefer to not chase a fast-running sardine if they can, so some live shrimp sometimes can make your morning bite until the sun takes over.

Again, we are dependant on the weather and water temperature, as this can change their mood. If the weather stays colder longer than



usual, live shrimp will still be your best bait. Our climate is changing, and I have noticed that we have had cold snaps in mid-April which dictates their mood.

### ARTIFICIAL BAITS

Topwater plugs like the "MirrO-lure Skin Series Surface Walker Mullet" work great in the early morning once they move into the flats. I find they work best when the water temperature is above 75 degrees. Fish are always on the



side, where the sun's rays hit the water first, as that is where they tend to get their morning heat and feed the best. From mid-morning on, I will switch to Saltwater Assassin, either a "Silver Mullet SplitTail" or my favorite, a "Lit'L P & V" in Glow/Lime on a 1/8-ounce jighead worked along the edges of the mangroves. This technique is great for catching Snook, Redfish and Mangrove Snapper.

## NATURAL BAITS

As the water temperature increases, the big Snook slow down and prefer fresh cut bait. Nothing works better than cut Threadfin Sardines or Pinfish. I use a 2/0 or 3/0 Kahle hook with a #4 split shot about 3-inches from the hook and just let it sit on the bottom. Some drawbacks are you will catch some catfish and rays, but if it's a Snook or Redfish, it will be a big one.

## TACKLE RECOMMENDATIONS

- OKUMA SRT Rod #761M  
7 1/2 ft medium-action rod with a fast taper.
- OKUMA Inspira ISX-3000 Spinning reel.
- Fins Windtamer 15# braided line.
- OHERO 30# fluorocarbon leader; at least 30 inches long in length. ☑

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 at: 813-973-7132 or by email at: atanes@msn.com

## 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL FREE KIDS FISHING CLINIC

PRESENTED BY CAPT. SERGIO ATANES - RISE TAMPA AND YERRID FOUNDATION

JUNE 15<sup>TH</sup>, PICNIC ISLAND 9:15 AM TO 12:30 PM



**O**ur goal is to educate future anglers 14 years old and under and teach them how to fish the Tampa Bay area. Fishing is a great way to get kids to bond with their parents, siblings and friends. Learning how to fish and being outside will provide a new experience away from computer games. Not every child can be an athlete, but every child can be an angler. We will teach each child the where and how to catch fish. Our staff includes some of the top charter captains in the area. All captains are donating their time to educate every child. Topics covered will be the types of fish to catch in the Tampa Bay area, knowing the types of live baits and artificial baits, casting and how to throw a net.

For the first 110 RSVPs, each child will receive a rod and reel combo to take home at no charge (a \$75 value). Our sponsors will be donating fishing tackle products to all children participating in our fishing clinic. Free food and drinks will be available at the end of the clinic.

ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT  
First 110 kids that register will get a free rod and reel combo with tackle.

RSVP to Capt. Sergio Atanes E-Mail atanes@msn.com  
Parents or guardians name-contact number and child's Tee Shirt size  
For more information, call or text 813-973-7132



MAYOR JANE  
CASTOR  
WILL BE HERE AT 10 A.M.  
TO WELCOME THE KIDS



### VOLUNTEERS

Capt. Sergio Atanes  
Capt. George Hastick  
Capt. Michael Dawson  
Capt. John Garcia  
Capt. Andrew Echenique  
Capt. Larry Fritch  
Capt. John Rivers  
Capt. Brian Goldman  
Capt. Phil Pegley  
Capt. Rick Liles  
Donald Waiberman

## KEY LARGO SAILING CLUB & COTTAGES

YOUR FLORIDA FISHING GETAWAY




Fish,  
Snorkel,  
Kayak,  
Sail,  
Bicycle...

or just  
kick back  
and relax!

305-451-3438

www.keylargocottages.com

- High Quality Custom Made Aluminum Trailers
- Available From 17' To 50'
- All Stainless Hardware
- Complete Winch Posts
- Aluminum Diamond Plate Fenders
- GVWR From 3,500 to 30,000 LBS.
- LED Clearance Lights
- Posi-lube Torsion Axles
- Delivery To Major Ports Around The World



Bad 2D Bone Trailers Inc.  
3625 NW. 31st Avenue  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309  
954-545-3020


www.bad2dbonetraillers.com

BAD 2D BONE  
TRAILERS

Did you know you can get your  
**CAPTAIN'S LICENSE**  
With 360 days of boating experience?

Sea School is the premier maritime training school in the country with over 36 years experience in dealing with U.S. Coast Guard Licensing, Regulations & Maritime Education, and over 52 USCG Approved Courses. Sea School is family owned and operated, so come join the Sea School family. Call us today and let us show you how we can take you where you want to go.

Teaching navigation since the Earth was flat...



For General Information or License Requirements Questions, Please Call

1-800-BEST-ONE (237-8663)

www.seaschool.com  
Facebook.com/seaschool

SEASCHOOL

Serving mariners since 1977



# SHOP ONLINE AT [www.FIFishingOutfitters.com](http://www.FIFishingOutfitters.com)

Open 7 Days - 9am to 6pm



FISHING OUTFITTERS

Over 5,000 sq. ft. of  
Fishing Tackle and Supplies

**ROLLING  
INTO  
TARPON  
TIME**



**ON SALE**



**SHIMANO  
TERAMAR RODS  
\$125.99**

Check Us Out on  
Facebook &  
Instagram  
and Watch for  
Upcoming Specials

**NEW ARRIVALS**



1500 US 19 Holiday, FL | 727-935-7258  
[www.tarponfishingoutfitters.com](http://www.tarponfishingoutfitters.com)



**St. Pete**  
FISHING OUTFITTERS

**Come By and Support Your  
Local Tackle Shop  
Where You're Appreciated!**



**Ice on Site  
24 Hours**  
Cash or Credit Card



Like Us On  
Facebook &  
Instagram to  
Stay Current



**FREE  
Fly Tying Class**  
Every Monday at 6PM  
Please call ahead to reserve a seat or  
**TIE WITH US LIVE  
ON FACEBOOK**

3450 34th St. North (Hwy 19), St Petersburg, FL | 727-317-4949  
[www.stpetefishingoutfitters.com](http://www.stpetefishingoutfitters.com)



**Tampa Fishing  
OUTFITTERS**



**#FittedToFish**

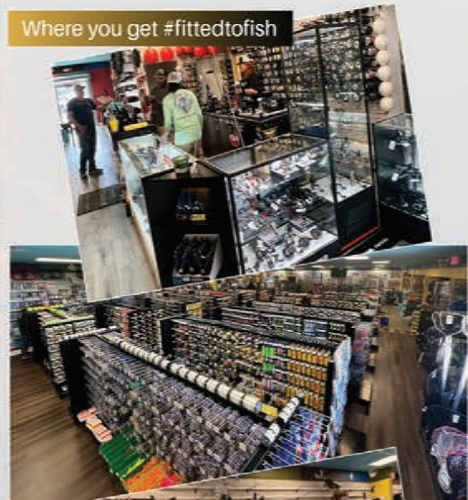
3916 W. Osborne Ave, Tampa, FL | 813-870-1234  
[www.tampafishingoutfitters.com](http://www.tampafishingoutfitters.com)



**LAKELAND  
FISHING OUTFITTERS**

Polk County's Largest Tackle Shop

Where you get #fittedtofish



Stop in for expert advice and an unbeatable  
selection all things fishing.

1330 E. Memorial Hwy, Lakeland, FL | 863-349-FISH (3474)  
[www.lakelandfishingoutfitters.com](http://www.lakelandfishingoutfitters.com)