

Carolina

DIXIE DEER CLASSIC
WINNERS



SPORTSMAN®

APRIL 2022

BLIND LUCK FOR TURKEYS

EARLY SEASON
GOBBLERS

LAKE JAMES
BRONZEBACKS

AUTUMN TACTICS FOR
SPRINGTIME SPECKS

FRESHWATER,
SALTWATER FISHING
HEATS UP



CRAPPIE
CORKIN'

\$2.99 APRIL 2022



CarolinaSPORTSMAN.com

X VALIDATED

The Original All-Welded Aluminum Makes History at the Bassmaster Classic!

Back-to-back Elite win's in 2021 proved to the boating industry that the original all-welded aluminum boat is capable of competing and winning, at the highest level of bass fishing. Jason Christie's championship at the 2022 Academy Sports + Outdoors Bassmaster Classic presented by Huk will forever be a historic moment for Xpress Boats and the entire bass fishing world. This accomplishment drew the final line in the sand and confirmed to any doubters that Xpress Boats all-welded aluminum can compete and win on the biggest stage of fishing, which has previously been conquered by glass boats. Luckily, you don't have to compete on the Bassmaster Elite Series to reap the benefits of years of engineering refinement built into our Xclusive Pro Bass Series. Whether you have unfinished business or competing in your first derby, welcome to the future!



XCLUSIVE PRO BASS SERIES

X21PRO / X19PRO / X18PRO

SeaDek
MARINE PRODUCTS

Available option on all Xclusive Pro Bass Series models



Photo by: Chris Brown



xpress boats[®]
we build xcitement

199 Extrusion Place, Hot Springs, AR 71901



xpressboats.com





PG AND BOATGIRL
OUTDOORS
PODCAST

PGANDBOATGIRL.COM

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

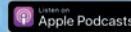


palmettoboatcenter.com



Get the latest Outdoor
News, Talk and Hunting
and Fishing Reports.

pgandboatgirl.com



— Visit —
VANCE
COUNTY
Henderson, NC



KERR LAKE



... Beauty on a Grand Scale



Fish • Camp • Boat • Sail • Swim • Bike • Bird Watch • Golf
Relax, Relate, and Retire ... All on a 50,000-Acre Playground!
Dine and Shop in Historic Henderson, NC

#VanceCountyTravelersDiscoverAlot • kerrlake-nc.com • 866.438.4565



40

SMALLMOUTH ON THE FLY



18

BLIND LUCK

Carolina CONTENTS

Volume 29 | Number 4 | April 2022

FEATURES:

12 UNIQUE TURKEY TACTICS

Unconventional methods are sometimes necessary to bag wary gobblers.

> By Terry Madewell

18 BLIND LUCK **COVER STORY**

A good blind is crucial when turkey hunting.

> By Mike Marsh

28 FREE RANGE CRAPPIE

High-tech equipment not needed for crappie this month.

> By Phillip Gentry

40 SMALLMOUTH ON THE FLY

Lake James bronzesacks are fun on fly tackle.

> By Jeremy Grady

54 FALL TRICKS FOR SPRING TROUT

Try these fall tactics for catching springtime specks.

> By Jeff Burleson

OUTDOOR UPDATE:

6 DIXIE DEER CLASSIC

COLUMNS:

24 COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE

By Capt. Jerry Dilsaver

34 SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY

By Phillip Gentry

46 SANTEE STRINGER

By Terry Madewell

48 LUNKER LINES

By Davy Hite

52 HEAD FOR THE MOUNTAINS

By L. Woodrow Ross

60 SOUND & SEA

By Chris Burrows

66 GREENER PASTURES

By Jeff Burleson

DEPARTMENTS:

23 Sportsman Showcase

51 Fishing Regulations

70 Hunting/Fishing Scrapbook

74 Advertiser Index

FISHING HOTSPOTS:

36 High Rock Lake crappie

37 Waccamaw River panfish

38 Jordan Lake crappie

50 Lake Murray strippers

62 Cape Fear offshore

63 New River speckled trout

64 Central SC redbfish and trout

ON THE COVER:

Turkey season is in full swing this month in both Carolinas, and the fishing is heating up for numerous species. Cover photo by Rick Small.



PUBLISHER

Jonathan Menard

MANAGING EDITOR

Brian Cope, brianc@sportsmannetwork.com

ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER

Desiree P. Lewis

ART DIRECTOR

Kevin Orgeron

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Jeff Cashio, Alissa Zeringue

CONTROLLER

Juanita Guidry

NC ADVERTISING SALES REP

Bradley Hulin

336-688-0273, bradleyh@carolinasportsman.com

SC ADVERTISING SALES REP

Stephen Loper

919-522-8667, stevel@carolinasportsman.com

ADVERTISING SALES

Peter Church, Asa Faulkner, Burton Angelle, and Mark Hilzlim (National Sales)

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR

Mitch Eby 919.602.3862, mitchebync@gmail.com

Carolina Sportsman is published monthly by
CAROLINA PUBLISHING INC.

FOUNDER

Allen J. Lottinger

PRESIDENT

Lisa Lottinger Cuccia

CAROLINA SPORTSMAN (USPS #012969) is mailed at periodicals postage rates and paid at Boutte, La., and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Carolina Sportsman, PO Box 37030, Boone, IA 50037. All rights reserved. Reproduction of contents is strictly prohibited without permission of Carolina Sportsman. **EDITORIAL** information and guidelines can be obtained by emailing Brian Cope at brianc@sportsmannetwork.com.

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES:

advertising@CarolinaSportsman.com

985.758.7217

FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS OR SUBSCRIPTION ISSUES, CALL 1.855.224.1667

Monday thru Friday, 7 am to Midnight
Saturday & Sunday, 9 am - 6 pm EST

14236 Highway 90
P.O. Box 1199, Boutte, LA 70039-1199
800.538.4355

Volume 29 | No 4

Star brite
STARTRON[®]

Enzyme Fuel Treatment

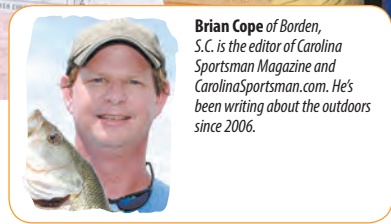
**START
RUN
STORE**

**WITH STAR TRON
THE #1 MULTI-FUNCTIONAL
FUEL TREATMENT**

WWW.STARTRON.COM
PROTECTION + PERFORMANCE

OUTDOOR UPDATE

with Brian Cope



Brian Cope of Borden, S.C. is the editor of *Carolina Sportsman Magazine* and *CarolinaSportsman.com*. He's been writing about the outdoors since 2006.

DIXIE DEER CLASSIC AWARDS

WAKE COUNTY WILDLIFE CLUB PRESENTED AWARDS FOR 2021 AND 2020 SEASONS

The 2022 Dixie Deer Classic was held March 4-6 at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds after taking 2021 off due to Covid. The Wake County Wildlife Club didn't want to leave hunters from the 2020 season without the recognition they deserved, so the awards ceremony was a double event.

Vincent Clark won the coveted Best in Show Award for his Avery County brute that officially scored 203 inches. Clark also won the Male Gun Nontypical category.

A total of 32 awards were presented to North Carolina deer hunters, along with

four awards for black bears. All these award winners appear in the following pages.

Twenty-three males won deer awards (10 for the 2021 deer hunting season including four youth hunters and six adults, along with 10 for the 2020 season including three youths and seven adults.) The final three males won awards for black bears.

Female hunters walked away with 13 awards. Eight killed deer during the 2021 hunting season. Another

four killed deer during the 2020 season, and one female won a black bear hunting award.

CAROLINA COYOTE CLASSIC

The 9th Annual Carolina Coyote Classic took place the weekend of Feb. 4-6. Sixty-nine teams of hunters killed a tournament record 315 coyotes during the event, which featured hunters in the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia and Tennessee.

Team Lynches River Mafia won the event with a total of 23 coyotes killed. They eked out the win through a tie-breaker (heaviest coyote) with Team Minton, Pethel, Wright, who also had 23 coyotes.

In the Fat Dog Class, Team Rocky River Reapers took the top spot with a 45.41-pound coyote.

CWD CREEPS CLOSER TO NC

The Virginia Dept. of Wildlife Resources reported last month that a deer in Floyd County tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). That deer was harvested 28 ½ miles from the North Carolina border, alarming NCWRC officials and deer hunters statewide.

Another Virginia deer was harvested in Montgomery County, 33 miles from North Carolina's border.

So far, CWD has not been detected in North or South Carolina. NCWRC collected 7100 deer samples since July 2021 with none testing positive for the fatal disease.

CWD is the result of abnormal proteins called prions spreading through a deer's body and causing spongy holes in the brain. CWD is 100% fatal. No cure exists for the disease, which is only detectable after a deer's death. ■



Top Photo: Sergio Duarte had two Jones County bucks scored at the Dixie Deer Classic. Above: Two deer harvested within 35 miles of N.C.'s border recently tested positive for CWD.

DIXIE DEER CLASSIC AWARD WINNERS



Vincent Clark, Male Gun Nontypical Award and Best in Show Award



Brittany Godwin, Female Muzzleloader Typical Award



Cooper Black, Youth Male Gun Typical Award



Jacey Hargrove, Youth Female Gun Typical Award



Dwayne Bryant, Male Muzzleloader Typical Award



Hailey Edwards, Female Gun Nontypical Award



Dennis Leonard, Male Bow Typical Award



Jena Hall, Female Bow Typical Award



Andrew Pernell, Youth Male Bow Typical Award

DIXIE DEER CLASSIC AWARD WINNERS



Rodney McDaris, (not present for photo) Male Gun Nontypical Award



Logan Barefoot, Female Gun Typical Award



Marc Jacobs, Male Crossbow Typical Award



Laura Tucker, Female Gun Typical Award



Tristan Fulcher, Youth Male Gun Nontypical Award



Rainey Mitchell, Female Muzzleloader Typical Award



Luke Johnson, Youth Male Gun Typical Award



Ransom Summers, Youth Male Crossbow Typical Award



Karleigh Davis, Youth Female Muzzleloader Typical Award



Tyson Kreed, Male Youth Gun Typical Presidential Award



Carl Fleming, Male Gun Typical Award



Christopher Harden, Male Crossbow Nontypical Award



Brooklyn Caillat, Youth Female Gun Typical Award



Dalas Norton, Male Crossbow Typical Award



Jamie Muhle, Female Bow Typical Presidential Award



Gus Gusler, Male Muzzleloader Nontypical Award



Madison Boyd, Female Crossbow Typical Award



Jonathan Stalls, Male Gun Typical Award

DIXIE DEER CLASSIC AWARD WINNERS



Josiah Noble, Male Bow Typical Award



Ashley Nevins, Female Muzzleloader Nontypical Award



Turner Vaughan, Youth Male Bow Typical Award



Matthew Peterson, Male Muzzleloader Typical Award



Pacen Dunn, Male Bow Nontypical Award



Jackie Cole, Virginia Black Bear Male Gun Award



Mark Stokes, Black Bear Male Gun Award



Karen Mitchell, Black Bear Female Gun Award



Timothy Leary, Black Bear Male Gun Award



GREAT GEAR THAT HUNTS™

We believe everyone should have the opportunity to pursue their outdoor adventures. That's why we build purposeful gear that is engineered and priced to suit every hunter.



NOMAD

nomadoutdoor.com



**UNCONVENTIONAL
METHODS ARE
SOMETIMES
NECESSARY TO BAG
WARY GOBBLERS.**

■ By Terry Madewell

Unique TURKEY TACTICS

Terry Madewell

MANY TURKEY HUNTERS GET LOCKED INTO 'TRADITIONAL' HUNTING TACTICS.

And that's primarily because these tactics have produced success in the past and hunters have confidence in those tactics.

But every turkey, and every scenario in the turkey woods, is different. Some gobblers seem to literally scratch a line in the leaves that they will not cross despite the best calling tactics. It's common to encounter gobblers that are old and wise or simply have been pressured too hard to respond to traditional tactics.

Changing your hunting approach can make a dramatic difference in success with these longbeards. Even champion turkey callers sometimes have to employ unique, or offbeat tactics or calls, to get a gobbler within range.

FAKE LIKE A JAKE

Mitchell Johnson from Purlear, N.C. is a National Wild Turkey Federation Grand National Calling Champion and owner of Dead-End Game Calls. Johnson said a key to success on a gobbler playing the "hard-to-get" game is understanding and being able to imitate the turkey's vocabulary and then tap into their basic instincts.

"Good calling is obviously a key to success. But understanding and being able to imitate the overall vocabulary of a turkey is crucial," he said. "The use of a jake call in the right scenario can produce lightning-fast results on a longbeard that's unwilling

to come to traditional calls."

Johnson (www.deadendgamecalls.com) said the gobblers have a jealous streak that can be used against them. One tactic he'll use when gobblers respond, but won't approach to hen calls, is to imitate gobbler calls.

"The full gobble will sometimes work. But I've found that employing the sounds of a jake can be even better," he said. "I'll make my hen calls and then follow that immediately with jake yelps from that same location. This can really tap into a dominate gobbler's aggressive nature when nothing else will."

Johnson said the fake jake call must be a good imitation of the real thing to work properly.

"A jake yelp is deeper in tone, more hollow sounding and slower than a hen yelp," he said. "Imitate this properly and it conveys to the hung-up gobbler that a jake has moved in on the hens. If needed, I'll imitate a jake gobble, which is an abbreviated gobble, or half-gobble sound.

"The jake sounds, mixed with good hen calling from the same location, is a great technique to tap into an old gobbler's sense of dominance," Johnson said. "But be ready, because when it works, the old bird may approach at double-time speed."

LOCATOR CALLS ➤



When two hunters join forces they can double-team a gobbler. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** If you're looking for an edge on a difficult gobbler be willing to try something unique.

Terry Madewell

LOCATOR CALLS

Hunters that do their scouting homework still have occasions when normal turkey locator sounds simply don't elicit a shock-gobble return.

Johnson said sometimes he knows birds are in the area, but the woods are silent.

"My number one way to break the silence is to use a goose call," Johnson said. "I use my TurnLane Goose Call, an air operated call, and will run a series of goose calls. This often gets a gobbler, or multiple gobblers, to answer. I use this right through the middle of the day when the woods do naturally quieten down from turkey calls."

Johnson said the area does not have to have a population of geese nearby for this to work. It's simply a sound that elicits a shock-gobble.

"Once I hear a gobble to this goose call, I'll develop a strategy to get into the best location to begin traditional calling and often that's all that's needed," he said. "But you've got to get his

location first."

Johnson said that it's also effective in late-evening when roosting a bird for the next morning's hunt.

"Owl calls are great for this, but sometimes the goose call will again work when other calls don't," he said.

HAMMER TIME

Steve Cobb of Union S.C. is a seven-time South Carolina State Calling Champion and a 25-year member of the Hunter Specialties Pro Staff.

"Sometimes I do the opposite of what's expected with a hard-to-get gobbler," Cobb said. "Birds can get call shy when pressured hard, especially on public lands. But if a hunter has confidence in their calling, I've seen times when getting aggressive with calling can produce incredible results."

Cobb said if a bird is hung up but not because of a physical barrier, aggressive calling can be a total game changer. But he'll typically employ this tactic only after trying the more traditional calling.

Sometimes it takes unique tactics to get longbeards within shooting range.



Terry Madewell



Steve Cobb said he'll put the hammer down and get aggressive on difficult gobblers.

Terry Madewell

"I'll use excited calls with loud cuts and cackles," he said. "I'll hammer him hard. I know at times this can turn a bird off. But if I've already tried traditional calling, I don't see much downside to trying. And I love to call aggressively anyway."

Cobb said when it works, the hunt can change from a standoff to flash hunt in a few heartbeats.

"If he gobbles back hard, cutting me off and then goes silent, I'm on high alert and scanning the woods because he's probably on his way," Cobb said.

TAG TEAM A GOBBLER

Hunters often hunt in tandem and some turkey hunting guides and callers have developed productive strategies for taking stubborn gobblers as a team.

"Two hunters team-working on calls can work," he said. "Calling options include sounding like two hens feeding contentedly, using hands to scratch the leaves. That doubles the

drawing power of the calling. Also, the hunters can get into a verbal hen-fight. Fighting purrs can be a good call here."

Cobb said an offshoot tactic is when the gobbler is out of sight. Cobb slips away, calling as he goes, leaving his shooter in the original position.

"I'll slip off in basically a straight line away from the gobbler, calling with clucks, purrs or soft yelps," he said. "The shooter does not call and this puts the shooter in a prime position should the longbeard follow. A hen walking off is a powerful motivator for a dominant gobbler. And if he follows, which they do a reasonable percentage of the time, this affords the shooter a prime opportunity."

TAKE A STAND FOR GOBBLERS ➤



Terry Madewell of Ridgeway, S.C., has been an outdoors writer for more than 30 years. He has a degree in wildlife and fisheries management and has a long career as a professional wildlife biologist/natural resources manager.

TAKE A STAND FOR GOBBLERS

Kimmy Hanks is an award-winning call maker and owner of Hanks Game Calls. He hails from Reidsville, NC and his calls won three categories of the 2021 NWTF's D.D. Adams Award for call making.

He said turkey hunters typically sit against an object when calling a gobbler and that's usually the right choice. But sometimes unique terrain or habitat features dictate a different philosophy is necessary to make the shot on a gobbler. Hanks said in these unique situations he's killed gobblers by standing behind a tree.

"Getting creative is crucial and I've killed gobblers by not sitting in front of a tree but standing behind it," he said. "It may be because of gnarly cover and I can't see clearly from ground-level. Standing has also enabled me to see



Terry Madewell

Kimmy Hanks said adapting to the conditions is a key to taking hard-to-get gobblers.

CROSS CREEK OUTDOOR SUPPLIES

537 Cross Creek Rd. • Henderson, NC 27536 252-492-9770

NEVER WORRY ABOUT SECURITY AGAIN! WITH SAFES FROM



Hand Guns for Concealed Carry



TAURUS



Smith & Wesson



BERETTA



500 YEARS. ONE PASSION.



RUGER



FEL



WE HAVE EVERYTHING FOR YOUR FIREARM NEEDS AND MORE, CALL TODAY!



over a small rise in topography or bushes otherwise blocking my view."

Hanks (www.hanksgamecalls.com) said holding the gun vertical behind the tree until the gobbler is approaching keeps him perfectly hidden. Once he knows how the gobbler is approaching, he'll place the stock on his shoulder and lower the barrel into shooting position.

"Moving the gun barrel slowly, right against the tree, I can get into shooting position without alerting the gobbler," he said. "This tactic has enabled me to take turkeys I otherwise would most likely not have been able to shoot." ■

Shut up and scratch for wary **LONGBEARDS**

Long-time turkey hunter Kimmy Hanks said a longbeard may gobble like he's interested but won't approach. "A number of factors cause this including birds being pressured hard and they do get call shy," he said. "This is a perfect time to shut-down the calling and start scratching leaves." Hanks said he'll mimic multiple hens scratching as though they're contented and feeding. The gobbler may still gobble when hearing the scratching and it often takes patience for the bird to commit. "Patience is a vastly under-utilized tool," he said. "The same is true for gobblers, but being ignored is not a gobbler's strength. The curiosity of hearing hens scratching and feeding, but not answering his gobbles, can cause him to check out the situation." The bird may approach while gobbling or he may get quiet and slip in. "It's crucial you scan the woods in his direction to see him first," he said. "If my position allows, I'll do all my scratching from the side that's hidden by my body. Once he's in sight, I simply allow his curiosity to draw him in for the shot." ■



Steve Cobb said amping up the calling attitude can get a stubborn gobbler to break the gridlock and approach quickly.

Terry Madewell



The **FIRMINATOR**
By Ranew's Outdoor Equipment®

MAKE YOUR **DIRT** WORK




MADE IN USA **Expect more from your food plot equipment.**

The Firminator G-3 models feature 16-inch or 18-inch ground turning discs, a seed hopper featuring the precision Accurate Seeding System, and a true agricultural-grade, cast-iron cultipacker. The G-3 is available in a compact ATV unit and 4-foot, 5-foot, 6-foot or 8-foot tractor units for premium results.

678.544.4400

THEFIRMINATOR.COM

WYANCY@RANEWS.COM

Mike Marsh



■ By Mike Marsh
**A GOOD BLIND IS
CRUCIAL WHEN
TURKEY HUNTING.**

BLIND LUCK

Rich Shively is an OLD-SCHOOL HUNTER,

from the days when the only way of keeping his pants pockets dry was sitting on a newspaper as he was sitting against a tree. Now 79, Shively, maker of Super Yelper Turkey Calls (superyelper.com; 304-707-6168), has taken his last two toms from tent blinds.

“I was a runner-and-gunner,” Shively said. “I hunted turkeys 64 years by moving to get into a better position. It was the only way we knew to hunt them. I shot my first gobbler in 1957 and have made turkey calls for 43 years. I took at least one turkey each year for 23 years. But, when I moved to North Carolina, hunting flat fields was different from hunting the mountains of Virginia and West Virginia.”

Shively also suffers age-related eye problems. The combination of unfamiliar terrain and vision problems eventually caused him to go five seasons without bagging a gobbler. Grudgingly, he started hunting from blinds.

“I hunted with Steve Banks, who uses blinds,” he said. “The first gobbler I shot from a blind was on his property 6 years ago. I did it again last season when I was watching two gobblers and three hens in a field. Two of the hens fought until one went into the woods.

“Twice, a red-tailed hawk spooked the other hens and the gobblers into the woods. Sitting in a comfortable chair, I switched between cedar, walnut and cherry Super Yelper scratch box calls. What did him in was my Pro-Automatic push-pin. I could move when I wanted. And that made me believe in blinds.”

BLINDS KEEP YOU HIDDEN >



The author was hunting from a tent blind when he killed this gobbler. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** It takes more than blind luck to kill a gobbler, but a blind and a little bit of luck are both helpful.

Mike Marsh

BLINDS KEEP YOU HIDDEN

Steve Banks, a Duke Energy retiree, lives in Wilmington. He invites several friends to his hunts. Now 71, he began hunting turkeys when the Jones County season opened in the 1990s.

"I didn't know anything about turkeys," he said. "I hunted along the Trent River with Dennis Hemby, who hadn't hunted them, either. We hid behind a piece of military camouflage. He made a few calls, a gobbler came in, and Dennis shot him."

In the late 1990s, Banks hunted in a tent blind in South Carolina with Dave Murrell. When he videoed the hunt, he realized blinds might hold the key. What clinched the deal was when he was back in Jones County, sitting in blow-down and called in a turkey flock.

"I thought I was hidden, until I saw a gobbler's red head running by me because I probably moved," he said. "Doghouse-style blinds were on the market and I set up three or four blinds wherever I saw turkeys on our properties. I bought them through after-season sales until I had 50 blinds. In 2000, I shot my first gobbler from a blind. I saw 50 turkeys fly down and a dozen gobblers fanning in a field. I put out a jake and a hen decoy and waited them out."

Banks became so enthralled with turkey hunting that he is a Diamond Life NWTF member. Over the seasons, he switched to hub-style blinds and added swivel seats.

"At first, I used Ameristep doghouse blinds, but sometimes wind blew them down. Hub blinds are more durable, but more expensive. Bears tear up one or two each season. We use longer

ords and up to 10 stakes per blind to prevent wind damage. Setting them in the edge of the woods, rather than in the open, also helps with the wind."

HUNTER MISTAKES AREN'T AS CRUCIAL

Banks hosts youth and inexperienced hunters. Blinds shield their movements from sharp-eyed turkeys. He wards off mosquitoes with ThermaCELL insect repellent devices.

"I have killed gobblers that came to decoys and never made a sound and I wouldn't have done it if I hadn't been in blinds. Blinds also space hunters apart. If everyone is running and gunning, they can interfere with each other."

Basil Watts is a 74-year-old retired Cape Fear River Pilot. He started hunting turkeys near Columbia, S.C. in 1973.

"You tried to get as close as possible to a gobbler without him seeing you and call him in, sitting down with your back against a tree," Watts said. "I had some success, but had enough turkeys spot me to show me how impossible it is to sit still long enough in most situations. Some came silently. Sometimes gobblers other than the one I was calling to saw me. Hens busted my setup. Everything that could go wrong, went wrong. The 10 rules of turkey begin with don't move. The other 9 are don't move, which is impossible for as long as it can take for a gobbler to get close enough to shoot."

Watts also used military camouflage before graduating to Gorilla adjustable-height blinds made of die-cut fabric. They allowed some movement.



Hunting from a turkey blind allows hunters to spread out all their gear before the hunt starts, eliminating the need to dig through pockets during crunch time.

Mike Marsh

BLINDS OFFER COMFORT, SAFETY

“I could reposition my gun below the fabric and push down the top edge with the barrel to shoot,” he said. “But, if you turned your head, you were still busted. When I leased property in Bishopville, I began using doghouse blinds overlooking a chufa patch and killed several gobblers.”

Watts has now used different hub blinds as they have improved. The fabric is better, the openings larger, the roof is higher and the zippers, poles and hubs are more durable.

“I like shoot-through netting,” he said. “Deer flies find the tiniest hole, making your hunt miserable near the end of the season. But netting keeps them out. It also prevents tent caterpillars from dropping down the back of your neck. You can’t sit still when they are crawling on you. A blind also keeps you warm when it’s cold and dry when it rains. Also, you can use the bathroom without spooking a gobbler.”

Watts sometimes hunts WMAs. He feels safer in a blind because another hunter can see the blind and back off. Also, another hunter can’t see any movements he makes, so he won’t be mistaken for a gobbler.

“A blind has downsides, too,” he said “It’s something extra to carry. So you hunt closer to the truck. Inside a blind, it can be hard to tell the direction of a gobbler. If the gobbler is on the roost, I unzip enough windows and put my ear to them until I can hear where he is located. You also have to be sure no light is coming through a window behind you. If you break that beam of light, he will run the other way.” ■



Basil Watts (left) called in a turkey for Roy Ziegler while they were hunting from a tent blind near Orangeburg, S.C. Tent blinds are great for teamwork hunts.



Mike Marsh is a freelance outdoor writer in Wilmington, N.C. His latest book, *Fishing North Carolina*, and other titles, are available at www.mikemarshoutdoors.com.

TENT BLIND TURKEY HUNTING TIPS >

THE NEW **ARGO 2021**

AURORA 950 SX 8x8
IS HERE.



GO
ANYWHERE



© 2021 ARGO XTV. Riders must wear an approved helmet, eye protection, protective clothing and when operating in water always wear a personal flotation device. Use handholds and stay completely inside the vehicle. Never engage in stunt driving. Along with concerned conservationists everywhere, ARGO® urges you to respect public and private lands. Ride only on designated areas or trails. Preserve your future riding opportunities by showing respect for the environment, local laws and the rights of others when riding.

VISIT **BOST ARGO ATV SALES**

6540 HWY 152 EAST • ROCKWELL, NC 28138 • 704-279-5736 • WWW.ATVARGO.COM

Tips for hunting turkeys with **TENT BLINDS**

Before entering a blind that has been set up overnight or longer, check for black widow spiders, fire ants, wasps and snakes before entering.

Use Repel camp fogger to ward off mosquitoes, ticks and deer flies and gnats. Apply Bengal odorless fire ant insecticide to nearby mounds. Fire ants may relocate to a tent blind.

Apply aerosol silicone tent waterproofing to maintain water repellency.

Carry a Tear-Aid fabric repair kit for sealing rips and raveled seams.

Use self-stick Velcro to hold tent window flaps in position.

Spray black aerosol paint to cover scratches on the blind's interior light-preventative coating.

Lubricate zippers and snaps with E-Z Snap zipper lubricant or surfboard wax.

Keep extra stakes, lines and a stake hammer in the tent's carrying bag.

Cut a piece of bamboo, river cane or bailing wire to provide a temporary replacement for a broken roof support.

When taking a shot, make sure the muzzle is outside the blind. A blast fired inside the blind can be deafening. Better yet, wear ear plugs or an electronic sound attenuating and enhancement device such as those made by Walker's Game Ear.

Use several different types of chairs. Lightweight folding chairs are best for single-day hunting portability. Heavier and less portable patio or swivel chairs provide more comfort for long-term setups.

For long hikes beyond closed gates on public lands, use a deer cart, pier cart or folding garden cart to carry heavy blinds and chairs. ■

COOKING ON THE WILD SIDE ➤



The edge of a tree line is a great spot to set up a turkey tent blind.

FIELD PRO TURKEY SEAT

Deer hunters and anglers have long known how comfortable Millennium's stands and seats are. Fortunately for turkey hunters, the company now makes the Millennium Field Pro Turkey Seat. It gets hunters' rumps completely off the ground, and their backs away from barky tree trunks.

Skids keep the seat from sinking into soft ground, the seat and backrest provide ultimate comfort, and the adjustable carry strap makes it easy to carry in and out of the turkey woods. It's available in Mossy Oak Obsession and Mossy Oak Bottomland patterns.

MSRP: \$105

For more info, visit: millennium-outdoors.com



SIDEWINDER GAME CALL

Mounted to your firearm, this electronic call is hands-free. It incorporates predator calls available for download on your cell phone, which mounts to the rear of the call. If you're going after coyotes or other predators, this call and your favorite firearm is all you need for a successful hunt. The speaker is crystal clear, the battery is good for 5 hours, and its compact design won't weigh you down.

MSRP: \$149.95

For more info, visit: convergenthunting.com

ARBOGAST HULA POPPER 2.0

The Arbogast Hula Popper 2.0 gives new life to one of the oldest lures on the market. This update is a great addition to any bass angler's tackle box.

Keeping the traditional deeply-cupped mouth which creates havoc that surface-feeding bass can't resist, this upgraded version adds a high definition crackle paint job, upgraded hook hangers and replaces the rear skirted treble with a feathered one, offering a more lifelike profile.

This 2-inch, 3/8-ounce lure is offered in numerous colors. It's a must-have for spring bass fishing trips when the topwater bite is just getting cranked up.

MSRP: \$7.99

For more info, visit: lurenet.com



Jerry Dilsaver

CHUNKY TURKEY CURRY

A LITTLE CHUNKY, A LITTLE
SPICY AND VERY FILLING

The author stirs in plenty of vegetables which help make this dish so chunky and tasty. **INSET:** A deep cast iron pot is just right to evenly cook the sumptuous amount of ingredients in this recipe.



Folks moan often about how difficult it is to prepare wild turkey. I totally disagree. Because it doesn't have the fat content of domestically raised birds, wild turkey doesn't always lend itself to cooking methods used for domestic birds. The truth is that sometimes even domestic turkeys dry out and become tough or chewy during cooking.

All it takes to prepare wild turkey well is to remember they don't have the natural fat content of a domestic turkey. But wild turkey can be prepared easily and deliciously.

This is an easy and different way to prepare wild turkey. It works well and is a good option for those times your pattern doesn't go where aimed and some minor surgery is required to remove pellets from the breast. If you save turkey legs separately, this is really good made with a bunch of turkey thighs and legs. The other advantages are this recipe doesn't require a lot of prep time and it tastes good. ■

TIP!

This is good curry -- good enough to sneak a bowl with no rice. Eat it like a soup or stew for a change of pace.

CHUNKY TURKEY CURRY

I like spicy foods. Green curry is typically the spiciest curry, but this blend is only a little spicier than being in the middle. For a milder taste, use less curry paste and/or cayenne pepper, or use red curry paste, which is milder.

A single side of turkey breast works well here, or various parts of the turkey that equal roughly 1½ to 2 pounds of meat. The slightly darker meat of thighs and legs can add a little more flavor for some palates. Because the meat is cut up, turkey breasts that received more of the shot pattern than intended can be used for this recipe without changing the taste or quality of the dish.

No one would ever make the mistake of calling

PREPARATION:

1. Dice the turkey into bite-size pieces.
2. Slice the Bok choy, onion, peppers and carrots into strips.
3. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium to medium-high heat.
4. Add the turkey pieces and onions and cook until no pink shows on the turkey (about 4-6 minutes) stirring often.
5. Remove the turkey and onions, but leave any drippings in pan.
6. Add the coconut milk, curry paste, fish sauce, bok choy, peppers, chili peppers, carrots, corn and peas and bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally to be sure they mix well.
7. Once everything is well mixed, add salt and cayenne pepper to taste and stir in well.
8. Reduce the heat to low medium, cover and cook until the vegetables are tender (about 6-8 minutes), stirring every couple of minutes.
9. Return the chicken and onions, and any juices to the pan and stir in the cream and cook until heated through (about 3-5 minutes).
10. If the broth becomes too thin stir in the corn starch and water mixture to thicken it.
11. Remove from the heat, stir in the lime juice and allow to rest for several minutes.
12. Serve over warm rice.

This is a pretty complete meal on its own. However, most folks will enjoy a slice of hearty bread or a roll to gather the last of the curry juices. I like salads and lettuce wedges and often add one with this, but not before the meal. I eat it after – like dessert. One time I made a batch a little on the spicy warm side

TIP!

Mix one Tsp of corn starch with 2 Tsp of water and stir in to thicken the broth if it becomes too thin.

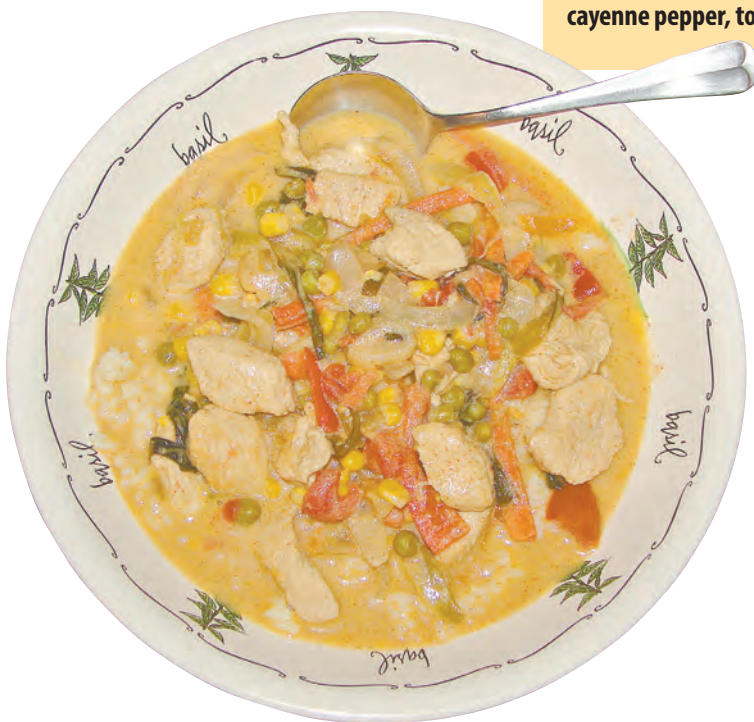
me a traditional cook. And that shows in this recipe. Frozen corn kernels, frozen peas, diced tomatoes and chili peppers aren't standard curry fare. But they work well and taste good here. These make up the chunky part of the curry, hence the name. They also add color and visual appeal on the plate. Don't be afraid to add other vegetables you like, or to omit those you don't particularly enjoy.

Don't chop the vegetables too small. I use pieces that are a couple of inches long. This recipe makes a lot and needs to be cooked in a large pot. I use a deep cast iron pot to keep the heat distributed well and contain everything. ■

and one of my friends who enjoyed the meal suggested ice cream as the ideal dessert. To each his own, but that's not a bad idea. ■

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Boned and skinned turkey breast,
- 2 Heads baby bok choy,
- 1 Small sweet onion
- 3 Baby bell peppers (assorted colors)
- Several cups of cooked rice
- 1 Can (small) green chili peppers
- ¾ Cup drained diced tomatoes
- ¾ Cup frozen green peas
- ¾ Cup frozen yellow corn kernels
- ½ Cup thin sliced carrots
- ½ Cup sliced water chestnuts
- 2 TBL canola oil
- 1 Can (14-ounce) coconut milk
- 3 TBL green curry paste
- 1 TBL fish sauce
- ½ TBL lime juice
- ¼ Cup cream
- Smoked sea salt and cayenne pepper, to taste.



Vegetables are key ingredients of this recipe, and the author encourages readers to mix in their favorites to suit their tastes.



Jerry Dilsaver of Oak Island, N.C., is a freelance writer, as well as a former national king mackerel champion fisherman. Readers are encouraged to send their favorite recipes and a photo of the completed dish to possibly be used in a future issue of the magazine. E-mail the recipes and photos to Jerry Dilsaver at captainjerry@captainjerry.com.

SEE YOUR LOCAL DEALER FOR SPECIALS

OFFERED BY



A.K. MCCALLUM CO.

715 Ramsey St
Fayetteville, NC 28301
910-483-6804
akmccallumco.com

ANGLERS MARINE NC

842 Ocean Hwy West
Supply, NC 28462
910-755-7900
anglersmarinenc.com

ANGLERS MARINE NC

13578 US-70 Bus
Clayton, NC 27520
919-585-7900
anglersmarinenc.com

BAY RACER MARINE

213 US Highway 70 West
Havelock, NC 28532
252-447-2277
bayracermarine.com

BERKELEY OUTDOORS

2955 S. Live Oak Dr
Moncks Corner, SC 29461
843-761-2628
803-333-9992
803-505-8727
berkeleyoutdoors.com

BOAT DOCK MARINE

5981 NC Hwy 8
Lexington, NC 27292
336-357-5906
boatdockmarinenc.com

BOATER'S MARINE

1309 Skyway Dr.
Monroe, NC 28110
704-282-0967
boatersmarinenc.com

BRAZDA MARINE

2645 Highway 24
Newport, NC 28570
252-240-1600
brazdamarine.net

BROAD CREEK MARINA

18 Simmons Road
Hilton Head Island, SC. 29926
843-681-3625
broadcreekmarinahh.com

BROWN'S MARINE INC

1825 Anthony Rd
Burlington, NC 27215
336-229-5784
brownsmarinenc.com

BROWN'S RV SUPERSTORE

30049 Hwy 151
McBee, SC 29101
(833) 209-7274
brownsvrsuperstore.com

CAPE ROMAIN MARINE

10129 Hwy. 17 N.
McClellanville, SC 29458
843-887-3330
caperomainmarine.com

CAROLINA INBOARD

1225 Bickley Road
Irmo, SC 29063
803-781-1024
carolinainboard.com

CAROLINA OUTBOARD

220 NC Hwy 210 West
Hampstead, NC 28443
910-319-0506
carolinaoutboard.com

CAROLINA WATER SPORTS & MARINE

114 Days Inn Drive
Mooreville, NC 28117
(704) 663-4500
carolinawatersportsmarine.com

CHARLOTTE SKI BOAT

1206 Brawley School Rd
Mooreville, NC 28117
704-525-6006
charlotteskiboats.com

CHATLEE BOAT & MARINE

2615 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
Sanford, NC 27330
919-775-7259
chatleeboats.com

COASTLINE RV & MARINE

2340 S. Highway 17
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
843-458-3999
coastlinervrentals.com

COLLINS INC.

4620 US 70 Bus Hwy East
Smithfield, NC 27577
919-934-3143
Collinsboating.com

COUICK'S MARINE

3613 Providence Rd S.
Waxhaw, NC 28173
704-843-2155
couicksmarine.com

COVE 2 COAST MARINE

1821 Lake Murray Blvd.
Columbia, SC 29212
803-814-1514
cove2coastmarine.com

COVE 2 COAST MARINE

2476 Savannah Hwy.
Charleston, SC 29407
843-212-3915
cove2coastmarine.com

DOC'S MARINE

5803 Icard Ridge Rd
Hickory, NC 28601
828-598-0637
docsmarinenc.com

DOSS MARINE

1720 Chapin Road
Chapin, SC 29036
803-345-1001
dossmarine.com

DOWN EAST MARINE

455 Highway 70 Otway
Beaufort, NC 28516
252-728-5817
downeastmarine.com

ED WATKINS MARINE

3333 Hwy 16N
Denver NC 28037
704-483-2628
edwatkinsmarine.com

FORT MACON MARINA INC

417 E FT Macond Rd Pob 370
Atlantic Beach, NC 28512
252-726-2055
fortmaconmarina.com

GRAHAM MARINE

318 W Harden St
Graham, NC 27253
336-227-8711
grahammarinesales.net

GREENVILLE MARINE

3600 Greenville Blvd. N.E.
Greenville, NC 27834
252-758-5938
greenvillemarine.com

GREG'S OUTBOARD CTR INC

1105 E Ocean Rd
Holly Ridge, NC 28445
910-329-0040
gregsoutboard.com

GUNNELLS MARINE

102 Rock Church Rd NW
Greenwood, SC 29649
864-223-2275
gunnelismarine.com

J & J MARINE

2530 Badin Road
Albemarle NC 28001
704-983-867
jandjmarinesales.com

JET JOE'S MARINE

SALES AND SERVICE
565 Satterwhite Point Rd.
Henderson, NC 27537
252-430-6209
jetjoesmarine.com

JIMMY'S MARINE

6685 Beach Drive SW
Ocean Isle Beach, NC 28469
910-575-3600
jimmysmarine.com

JOHNSON'S MARINE & OFFROAD

1782 Old Edisto Dr.
Orangeburg, SC 29115
803-531-1655
johnsonmarineandoffroad.com

LONG'S FISHING & MARINE

5401 HWY 24
Anderson, SC 29625-6020
864-287-9064 • Fax 864-287-2965
longs-marine.com

LONG ISLAND MARINA

8400 Long Island Road
Catawba, NC 28609
828-241-4877
longislandmarina.com

MARINE 360

1925 Johnson Marina Rd
Chapin, SC 29036
803-749-2360
marine360sc.com

MARINE SERVICE PRO, INC.

8210 River Road SE
Southport, NC 28461
910-363-4725
marineserviceprosinc.com

MARINE WAREHOUSE

6921 Market Dt
Wilmington, NC 28411
910-799-1277
marinewarehousecenter.com

MARINE WAREHOUSE CENTER

3881 Savannah Highway
Johns Island, SC 29455
843-974-5353
marinewarehousecenter.com

MARTIN'S PERFORMANCE BOATING

9345 Macedonia Church Rd
Prosperity, SC 29127
803-364-2162
martinsmarine.com

MERRITT MARINE

1804 NC-86
Hillsborough, NC 27278
919-732-7377
merrittmarine.com

NORTH POINT WATERSPORTS

112 Doolie Rd.
Mooreville, NC
704-799-1994
northpointwatersports.com
info@npwatersports.com

PERFORMANCE EAST

604 Corporate Drive
Goldsboro, NC 27530
888-503-8900
ncpowersports.com

PRECISION MARINE INC

5201 US Hwy 70 E
Goldsboro, NC 27534
919-751-1199
precisionmarineinc.com

RADCLIFFE MARINE

865 US-264 Bypass
Belhaven, NC 27810
(252) 943-3923
radcliffemarine.com

ROCK OUTDOORS

7440 NC Hwy 8
Lexington, NC 27292
336-793-8710
rockoutdoors.com

ROGUE MOTION BOAT SALES, SERVICE & STORAGE

65 Sycamore Ave
Charlesont, SC 29407
843-633-1433
roguemotion.com

SEA ISLAND MARINE

1105 Rodgers Street
Beaufort, SC 29902
843-524-7272
seaislandmarinebeaufort.com

SEEL'S OUTBOARD, INC.

1937 Savannah Highway
Charleston, SC 29407
843-556-2742
seelsoutboard.com

SOUTHPORT MARINE MART

4711 Long Beach Rd
Southport, NC
910-457-6350
marinemartnc.com

SOUTHPORT WATERSPORTS

4888 Coastal Drive
Southport, NC 28461
910-477-6681
southportwatersports.com

SOUTHSIDE OUTDOORS

1077 Clarence Coker Hwy
Turbeville, South Carolina 29162
843-659-2628
southsideoutdoors.com

STRICKLAND MARINE CENTER

4520 Hwy 24
Anderson, SC 29626
864-225-0145
stricklandmarine.com

STROUD AND SON MARINE SALES

1897 Ocean Hwy
Edenton, NC 27932
252-482-8938
stroudandson.com

SUTTON MARINE

914 park avenue southeast
aiken, sc 29801
803-648-6141
suttonmarine.com

THE BOAT RACK

7565 E NC 150 Hwy
Sherrills Ford, NC 28673
828-478-2222
theboatrack.com

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

112 A North Cherry St.
Cherryville, NC 28021
704-445-8848
teagreatoutdoors.com

TRI-COUNTY MARINE

1203 Premier Road
Granite Falls, NC 28630
828-728-4845
tricityboats.com

TWIN LAKES MARINE, INC

265 Satterwhite Point Rd
Henderson, N.C. 27537
252-431-0416
twinlakesmarinenc.com

UNIVERSAL MARINE

144-A Wayne Drive
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-723-1577
universalmarinenc.com

WEBSTERS MARINE INC

5974 N Okatie Hwy
Ridgeland, SC 29936-8248
843-987-6663 • Fax 843-379-2628
webstersmarine.com

YOPP BROTHERS INC

883 Hwy 210 W Pob 849
Sneads Ferry, NC 28460
910-327-2831
yoppbrothersmarine.com

Not all North Carolina and South Carolina American Suzuki Motor of America Inc. marine dealers are represented in this advertisement.



IT'S GOOD TO KNOW

YOU'RE PROTECTED

ENGINEERED WITH ONE GOAL, PEACE OF MIND

Suzuki outboards are engineered and built for the long run, with features like oil-bathed self-adjusting timing chains, dual water inlets, anti-corrosion technology and water detecting fuel systems, to name a few. Every Suzuki outboard motor is backed by our 5-Year Factory Limited Warranty, ranging from the ultra-compact 2.5HP portable to our flagship DF350A. This new warranty, along with a nationwide team of dealers and customer service professionals who are dedicated to your satisfaction, will give you even more confidence and peace of mind knowing you're protected.



THE
ULTIMATE™
OUTBOARD MOTOR

5 YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY applies to qualifying purchases of Suzuki outboard motors sold and delivered to the retail purchaser, for pleasure (non-commercial) use only, from April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022. See Suzuki Limited Warranty for additional details. Suzuki, the "S" logo, and Suzuki model and product names are Suzuki Trademarks or ®. Don't drink and drive. Always wear a USCG-approved life jacket and read your owner's manual.

© 2022 Suzuki Marine USA, LLC. All rights reserved.



FREE RANGE CRAPPIE



HIGH-TECH EQUIPMENT
NOT NEEDED FOR CRAPPIE
THIS MONTH. ■ By Phillip Gentry

Phillip Gentry

WHEN MARCH FLIPS OVER TO APRIL,

crappie anglers across the Carolinas know it's time to head for the backs of creeks and coves or other shallow water locations where crappie are known to spawn.

Since both black crappie and white crappie are present in both states, panfish anglers typically begin catching black crappie, which spawn 2 to 3 weeks earlier than white crappie, from the first week of April until the end of the month.

For lakes that have both species, white crappie pick up about the time black crappie move off the beds. This can extend the season well into the month of May.

Several tactics work well for catching crappie in the shallows. Three favorites of Carolina anglers are detailed below.

DOCK SHOOTING

Randy Pope of Hickory, North Carolina is a master dock shooter. He can consistently hit an opening in a dock or gap between the motor and float of a pontoon boat that measures no more than 6 inches high and a foot across, skipping the light jig 15 - 20 feet back into the opening.

Shooting docks is a single-pole tactic for skipping a crappie jig into the furthest recesses of a boat dock which crappie frequently use as structure to hide, ambush prey, or just hang out. Shooting the jig is achieved by gripping the jig on small diameter line in one hand and bending the rod over into a bow. The bail on the spinning reel is open in the other hand with the line held tight using the trigger finger. When the jig is released, the rod snaps forward, shooting the jig away from the rod tip. With critical timing, the trigger finger releases the line, allowing the jig to fly off on a flat trajectory.

Randy Pope is a dock shooting champion with his ability to get his crappie jigs into tight spots around boat docks that never get fished. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The month of April means crappie season across the Carolinas, and you don't have to go into debt to catch them.

"The key is timing the release of the line and the jig," he said. "Using 4 pound test allows me to get more distance because the line comes off the reel easier. I've also put a lot of time in on the water shooting docks."

Pope said that most crappie anglers who try dock shooting are not successful because they don't allow themselves enough time to learn how, where, and when to use the tactic. For him, dock shooting is nearly a year-round venture. He admits however, that it's most effective during the spring spawn and post spawn.

LONG LINE TROLLING >



Phillip Gentry

LONG LINE TROLLING

Ronnie McKee of Piedmont, SC is a self-professed long line trolling aficionado when it comes to crappie fishing. He prefers trolling when crappie move shallow so he can pick them off in mid-migration, moving either into the shallows or backing out of the shallow water spawning grounds.

Once he has identified a stretch of water containing migrating crappie, McKee will line up over the top of them, drop his trolling motor, and cast 6 to 8 lines out behind the boat. It's trolling in the traditional sense. But at some point, some crappie anglers decided to call it long line trolling to distinguish the tactic from the spider rig, slow, vertical trolling that's also popular with perch jerkers.

McKee said anglers must use several integral pieces of gear to be successful at long line trolling. Those items, in no certain order, include variable speed trolling motor, rod holders, GPS/depth finder, long rods, durable reels, and a handful of good crappie jigs.

"If somebody is just starting out, I would tell them to get a quality reel that's going to hold up to the pressure, a decent line in the 6- to 8-pound range, and some quality jigs," he said.

"You're going to need a basic set-up of rod holders off either the back or the front of your boat. If you start off putting your jigs out at 30 feet from the boat, you've got to know your speed.

Using GPS, start trolling at 0.7 to 0.8 mph with a 1/16-ounce jig. That's basically going to get you 6 to 8 feet down in the water column and you'll start to catch fish on that."

From there, adjusting the jigs' running depth is a balance of jig weight, boat speed, and the amount of line out.

JIG AND CORK

Many panfish anglers grew up learning to fish for crappie using a single rod and fishing with a bobber. Every one of those anglers has had the experience of reeling the cork back in only to have it sink out of sight from the weight of a hefty slab.

Today, that instance has a name and is highly regarded as a productive tactic when crappie are spawning or at least holding around shallow structure.

Long-line trolling is a favorite crappie fishing technique. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Amy Gentry shows off a hefty spring-time crappie.



Phillip Gentry

“That’s about all I do during the spring and early summer,” said Eddie Lyles from Dillon, SC. “It’ll work anywhere you have standing timber, stumps or vertical structure like boat docks and piers, the places where crappie like to bed during the spawn.”

His set up is pretty simple. He takes a slip cork and attaches it above the jig, usually a marabou jig or plastic tube body, with the bobber stop set at around 18 inches to 2 feet. Then he’ll ease around the shoreline and pitch or flip the jig around and between the structure.

The cork will put the jig at the right depth to be just above the fish. He alternates the retrieve between holding it still or slowly pulling the cork, which makes the jig beneath move in an enticing manner.

“You can use a pegged cork like you buy in any bait shop. But it’s harder to cast and sometimes getting the rig in a tight spot or underneath an overhang makes a difference in the number of fish caught,” he said. ■



Phillip Gentry of Waterloo, S.C., is host of “The Outdoor Show,” radio podcast at www.pgandboatgirl.com or heard on WZLA FM, 92.9, in Greenwood/Abbeville, S.C.

WHAT, NO LIVESCOPE? >



Phillip Gentry

GET IN THE ACTION

BRONZEYE POP 40

Designed by MLF Angler Dean Rojas, the smaller sized Bronzeye Pop 40 is a perfect lure to throw and can be fished with a variety of techniques. It features Gamakatsu Nano Smooth Coated Superline Double Frog Hooks, which give a weedless presentation, increases hookup percentage, and don't risk bending out. When fish are still looking up but don't want a full-sized entrée, this should be the go-to topwater solution.

SPORTS PROFESSIONALS

WWW.SPRO.COM

WHAT, NO LiveScope?

For crappie anglers who have made the change to forward facing sonar for crappie fishing, the spring spawn is often the least effective time to use the new technology. However, that doesn't mean LiveScopers have to sit the month of April out.

One of the drawbacks of the popular new sonar systems is that shallow waters of 8 feet or less are somewhat of an Achilles heel to forward facing systems, particularly when using the sonar in a standard forward view.

Keep these tips in mind when running LiveScope for crappie fishing during the spawn:

- **Don't Fish The Beds –**

Not all crappie spawn at the same time, so while some are on the bank, you can use forward facing sonar as usual for those fish still holding deeper.

- **Use Perspective**

View – This setting will give you a better read of what's around the boat but not as specific a depth reading as forward view. Most crappie will be suspended about midway to $\frac{1}{3}$ from the bottom and more than willing to rise to an intruding bait.

- **Look For Deeper Spawn Sites and Structure –**

In lakes and reservoirs with an abundance of crappie, some have learned to spawn in waters as deep

as 15 – 20 feet. This is particularly true in clear water lakes where visibility from the surface causes fish to be spooky. Fish in this depth range are much easier to pick up on sonar than those in 4 – 5 feet of water. ■

SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY >

This isn't the best month to use forward-facing sonar for crappie, but with a few adjustments LiveScope anglers can still get in on the action.



Phillip Gentry

BLUE WAVE BOATS

Since 1992



Introducing... 2600 Makaira

LOA: 26' 10" | BEAM: 9' 1" | FUEL: 90 GALS | MAX HP: 400 | WEIGHT: 5,050 LBS

Meet 2600 Makaira... the newest model in the Blue Wave Boats Hybrid Series.

2600 Makaira is based off the wildly popular 2800 Makaira and shares many of the same features like rod lockers built into the cap, flip-up aft bench seat, bow seating, and a tempered glass windshield. Topping it all off there is plenty of room to fish in the cockpit or bow!

The Makaira is now standard with a d-tube t-top that is form-fitted into the console making for a generous walk-thru from/to bow or cockpit.



405.382.0349 | www.bluewaveboats.com

SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY

Phillip Gentry

The panfish bite heats up this month, and kayaks are the perfect craft for catching them.



PADDLING FOR PANFISH

Phillip Gentry

BEDDING BREAM, CRAPPIE ARE TOP TARGETS FOR KAYAKERS THIS MONTH

Springtime is great for pursuing all manner of freshwater fish. But a valid argument can be made that “panfish” species are the most highly sought after fish from mid-March to mid-May because the annual spawning rituals often congregate them in the shallows as well as make them easier to catch.

Catching and keeping fish during the spawn is often frowned upon for certain species like bass and trout as annual recruitment is important to maintain those fisheries. When it comes to panfish, specifically crappie, bluegills, and shellcrackers, harvest during the spawn is not as big a concern because panfish are known to be prolific breeders and may even spawn more than once a year.

Targeting a fish that prefers backwater shallow areas is a kayak angler’s dream. In many instances, savvy kayakers can slide into remote areas and have sev-

eral acres of prime spawning habitat all to themselves, out of the reach of power boats.

Another advantage to a cartop, plastic boat is the stealth it allows for the angler to get within a rod’s length of spawning habitat without spooking fish. At times kayak angling in this situation can be very much like fishing in a barrel.

Panfish tackle also fits very easily on a kayak. The angler only needs a couple of light or ultra light action spinning rods and a small tackle box for either terminal tackle or a selection of jigs or small panfish lures. Even kayak anglers who choose to go the live bait route when fishing for panfish can easily fit a box of worms, cricket cage or an aerated minnow bucket somewhere in the cockpit of the boat without having it take up too much space or get in the way.

Possibly the best part of targeting panfish is taking some food home for the

table. Many anglers practice catch-and-release for everything they catch, including panfish. But nothing is wrong with keeping a few panfish for the frying pan.

Crappie spawn earlier than both bluegills and shellcrackers. This month, anglers can often target crappie, then shellcrackers, then bluegill in order with some overlap in the time frame. Some anglers fish exactly on the full moon. But others say a few days before or a few days after is the best. Undeniably, moon phase is a determining factor in spawning. But length of daylight, water temperature, and water quality are also factors. ■



Phillip Gentry of Waterloo, S.C., is host of “PG & Boat Girl Outdoors” podcast and a veteran outdoor writer.

PANFISH 101

Although commonly lumped together in many circumstances under the handle panfish, the three major panfish species sought this time of year — crappie, bluegill and shellcrackers — all have distinctly different characteristics, especially when targeting one specific species.

All panfish share many common traits. All three are members of the sunfish family and range statewide across both Carolinas.

The species differ in physical characteristics. Bluegill have an orange/yellow sheen stemming from an olive coloration while shellcrackers have a more gold/green coloration. The tip of the gill cover, or operculum, is deep blue to black in bluegill and black, tipped with red or orange in shellcracker.

Old timers frequently refer to both bluegill and shellcrackers as “bream.” The general term “crappie” encompasses both black and white crappie, often pronounced “croppie” by people who did not grow up in the Carolinas.

It’s easy to distinguish a crappie from a bream. Crappie are generally white or silvery in overall color tone while bream range in the green to yellow hue. But when spawning, males of all three species will take on much darker overtones.

Crappie have much larger mouths than bream and tend to feed more on baitfish than worms or insects. Both bream species are highly opportunistic feeders. Bluegills feed primarily on insects, invertebrates and small fish mostly near the surface. Shellcrackers feed on the bottom and prefer crayfish, mussels, snails, and insect larvae. ■

When anglers use tiny lures and ultra-light rods and reels, chunky panfish can be formidable fighters.



BEST BETS

NORTH CAROLINA

WHAT — Bluegill and Shellcrackers

WHERE — Lake Hickory

HOW — Fish shallow water flats, humps and saddles from mid-March through Mid-May using large redworms or half of a nightcrawler on a split shot rig and a No. 2 Aberdeen hook.

LAUNCH — One of the easiest access points is the pay ramp at the marina on the northern end of the Hwy 321 bridge. Two favorite public accesses are Gunpowder and Lovelady, off Grace Chapel Church Road in Hickory.

INSIDERTIP — Shellcrackers don’t bite as well in muddy water. If you have the choice, look for clear water or slightly stained water.

SOUTH CAROLINA

WHAT — Crappie, Bluegill and Shellcrackers

WHERE — Lake Murray

HOW — Systematically cast a small 1/64 or 1/32 oz straight tail jig under a cork (about 18”) around structure. Because all three species spawn at different times, you’re likely to find one in pre-spawn, one in post-spawn and one in prime spawn. The small, nondescript jig will catch all three species.

LAUNCH — Dreher Island State Park is centrally located near the middle of the large impoundment and has tons of spawning cover nearby to target all three major panfish species.

INSIDERTIP — Look for shoal marks on any decent topo map. The bluegill and shellcrackers will gravitate to the bottom and many shoals have planted brush somewhere off the end of the point that will hold crappie.

CRAPPIE & BREAM HOTSPOTS ➤

Finest Quality Brisket Jerky

BUFFALO RIDGE JERKY

BuffaloRidgeJerky.Com

12 incredible marinades

USE DISCOUNT CODE CSM20 AND GET 20% OFF YOUR FIRST ORDER!

The crappie fishing really heats up this month on High Rock Lake.

SIZZLING SLABS

Crappie catch fire at High Rock Lake

T By Tony Garitta
 he past three years the crappie fishing at High Rock has been as good as it's ever been," said Maynard Edwards of Yadkin Lakes Guide Service. "Years ago, when you caught 50 crappie, the majority fell shy of the size limit. That changed when the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission removed the size and creel limits on crappie. Now when you catch 50 crappie, the majority will be quality fish. Harvesting the smaller fish has really helped."

Edwards said catching spring crappie is all about knowing whether the fish are deep or shallow.

If the water temperature remains in the lower 50s in early April, the fish can be near the bottom 15 to 23 feet deep.

"When this happens, fishermen have trouble catching them because they think the fish are in the shallows to spawn. But their 'thinking' is ahead of the fish," said Edwards. "Crappie won't move shallow until the water warms."

For deep crappie, Edwards tight lines with spinning gear, using medium-light crappie rods and companion reels in conjunction with a drop rig consisting of a 1-ounce sinker tied to the end of his 6-pound test line with two small jigs connected 18 inches above the sinker. He lowers the rig to the bottom, then turns his



reel handle one revolution to place his offering slightly off the bottom. Then he waits for the big bite.

"The crappie lingering in deep water are usually the bigger crappie," said Edwards (336-249-6782). "Minnow-tipped jigs catch the larger fish."

When the water temperature rises into the upper 50s and 60s, the fish move to the bank to spawn. They'll seek brush near docks in coves and along pebble-bottom nooks in 8 to 10 feet of water where they become susceptible to offerings from fishermen of all ages.

During the spawn, Edwards fishes Flat Swamp, Abbotts and Crane creeks.

Edwards said if the fish stop biting at one brush, he moves to the next closest brush. If crappie are in an area, the bite might stop at one brush but be hot at others.

"It's a great time to take the family fishing," said Edwards. "Tie a 1/6-ounce jig behind a bobber and lob it out. Most youngsters can get the hang of casting the rig. And all they have to do is slightly move the bobber to set the jig in motion."

"With the fish in the shallows, casting with spinning gear works best," said Edwards.

Late in April or with a cold front, Edwards said the crappie start moving out and favor rock and rock veins. That's when trolling jigs attached to long-lines becomes effective. ■

**Call Now to Schedule
 Your Trailer Maintenance... Don't Wait!**

Capps
TRAILERS.com
 Parts • Sales • Service

Boat • Dump • Enclosed
 Equipment • Utility

Hwy. 70E, Dover (5 miles east of Kinston), NC • 252-523-1038

ALUMA

**All Aluminum Construction, Lightweight,
 Maintenance Free, Torsion Axles, LED Lighting
 Trailers for ATV, Equipment, Car Hauler,
 Utility, Jet Skis and so much More**



**Your Eastern NC
 Trailer Headquarters!**



BREAM BUSTIN' TIME

Waccamaw River is panfish haven in spring

By Jeff Burleson

For most freshwater anglers, bream fishing rarely gets much attention until June when the bedding season is in full bloom. But the blackwater rivers along the coast warm quickly in springtime, energizing the bream into feeding heavily along the fertile banks where food rains down every time the wind blows.

In Horry County, S.C., River Guide, Matt Varnadore of Waccamaw Outfitters takes customers to the river every day on private excursions in the gorgeous Waccamaw River out of Conway.

"The springtime is an awesome time to fish for the almighty bream," Varnadore said. (843-504-1012) "Everything in nature is starting to bloom and the bugs are falling from the tree limbs along the riverbanks. The fish move to feed along the banks next to cypress trees."

The Waccamaw River originates in N.C. on the lower end of Lake Waccamaw and travels south into S.C. through Conway and dumps into the ocean just southeast of Georgetown. Some of the best fishing for bream is in the Conway region of the river due to the massive fertile grounds that feed it.

The swamps are wide in this section, providing bream with an endless supply of food resources. And since the river is affected by the daily lunar tide cycle, the mile-wide swamps will dry out on low tide and drain into the main river, channels, and small

oxbow lakes.

"Low tide is my favorite time to fish for bream in the Waccamaw. Bream are ambush predators and they corral along the banks and feast on everything the river has to offer," he said.

Varnadore targets the base of cypress trees, under overhanging limbs, and next to any debris in the water. He uses both natural bait and lures this time of year.

"My favorite method is a toss up between small, white Beetle Spins and a bream buster with a red worm under it. Crickets are probably the top bait for people to use in the river. But I just like red worms better because the bait stays on the hook better and you can catch several fish on the same worm," he said.

He also likes to fly fish in the river in the springtime. Bream are constantly looking up along the bank for bugs falling off tree branches into the water. Varnadore uses Glo bugs on his bream buster or on his flyrod.

"They love a bug," he said

The blackwater rivers that trickle through the coastal plain can offer super action on light tackle in the spring. The Waccamaw is one of the best, but the Little Pee Dee, Black River, Edisto River, and many others can offer similar action for pan-sized bream. ■

Crickets, red worms or flies can all entice spring-time bream into biting on the Waccamaw and other blackwater rivers.

JORDAN LAKE GIANTS

Slab crappie are feasting for the spawn

By Dusty Wilson

The month of April at Jordan Lake gives crappie anglers a unique and excellent opportunity to load their boat with slabs. With a multitude of fish already on the spawning flats and the last waves to come, anglers can target fish moving to the spawning flats as well as those leaving. Tournament angler Freddie Sinclair of Clayton, NC will be there pulling a longline spread of jigs and minnows through the traffic.

"I'll be fishing in 12 feet of water down to 2 feet of water," said Sinclair. "In April, I'll start about midway of the spawning coves, trolling the creek channel that leads back to the spawning flat. I like to longline troll this time of year because the water temperature is up and I can cover water faster than tight-lining. I'm able to troll anywhere from 0.5 to 1.0 mph, depending on how deep the fish are and how aggressive."

The spawning coves that Sinclair trolls are not necessarily miles back in major creek arms as one might think. Most are off the main lake area and look to be little more than indentations when viewed on a map or GPS screen. But according to Sinclair, most of these will have a small feeder creek and channel that crappie use for transportation. This channel leading out to the main lake is where he focuses.

MIX IT UP

If I'm fishing in 12-foot of water and see on my sonar that fish are staged up in the top of the water column to about 5 feet down, I'll long-line troll with 1/48-ounce



Freddie Sinclair likes to troll for crappie on Jordan Lake this month.

jigheads," said Sinclair. "If they are closer to the bottom, I'll pull 1/32-ounce jigheads. I like to mix up artificials and live minnows. The minnows will go on hair jigs and sometimes I'll put one on a plain hook with a split shot in front. The rest will be curly tail grubs without minnows. I let the water clarity dictate the color of those. If the water is stained or muddy, I'll use black, pink, chartreuse, or orange. If it's clear to stained, I'll use red, blue, ice blue, or chartreuse.

Sinclair most often chooses the coves he trolls from years of experience. But he said anglers new to the lake can find likely coves by studying a topography map for coves with expansive shallow flats in the back that are suitable for spawning. He prefers to fish from the middle of the lake to the north end in April. ■



Trusted By Sportsman For 30 Years

Sarah Judy's
INSURANCE AGENCY

BOAT - MOTORCYCLE & ATV - CAMPER & RV
HOME - AUTO - RENTAL - FLOOD - LIFE

Personal Service Guaranteed

3090 Jefferies Hwy • Walterboro SC
Phone **843.538.5856** • Fax **843.538.5282**

www.sarahjudysinsurance.com

EXCEL BOATS



Bay Pro 220 w/ Standard .160ga Aluminum

BAY PRO

183 | 203 | 220 | 230

The Bay Pro represents the highest level of craftsmanship, performance, durability and fishability.



 **YAMAHA**

Experience the smooth operation, handling and legendary trustworthiness of Yamaha and an Excel Bay Pro.

www.excelboats.com



Tucked away in the foothills of western North Carolina lies **LAKE JAMES,**

a lake that's fed by three trout streams. The cold mountain water combined with the clarity makes for one of the best smallmouth bass fisheries in the Carolinas.

Every year from about the middle of April to the middle of May, smallmouth bass move into the shallower water to spawn. Anglers will find fish in all phases of the spawn, and can catch them on a variety of traditional bass fishing techniques. But one of the most fun ways to catch these fish is with a fly rod.

Lake James is a very clear lake, which can sometimes be a challenge. The locals don't call it the "dead sea" for nothing. Therefore, fly fishing is an excellent option to try. These bass probably don't see many flies. So something different can be a key. Also, anglers can see the fish come up and eat the fly, which makes it more exciting.

LOOK FOR SUNNY SPOTS

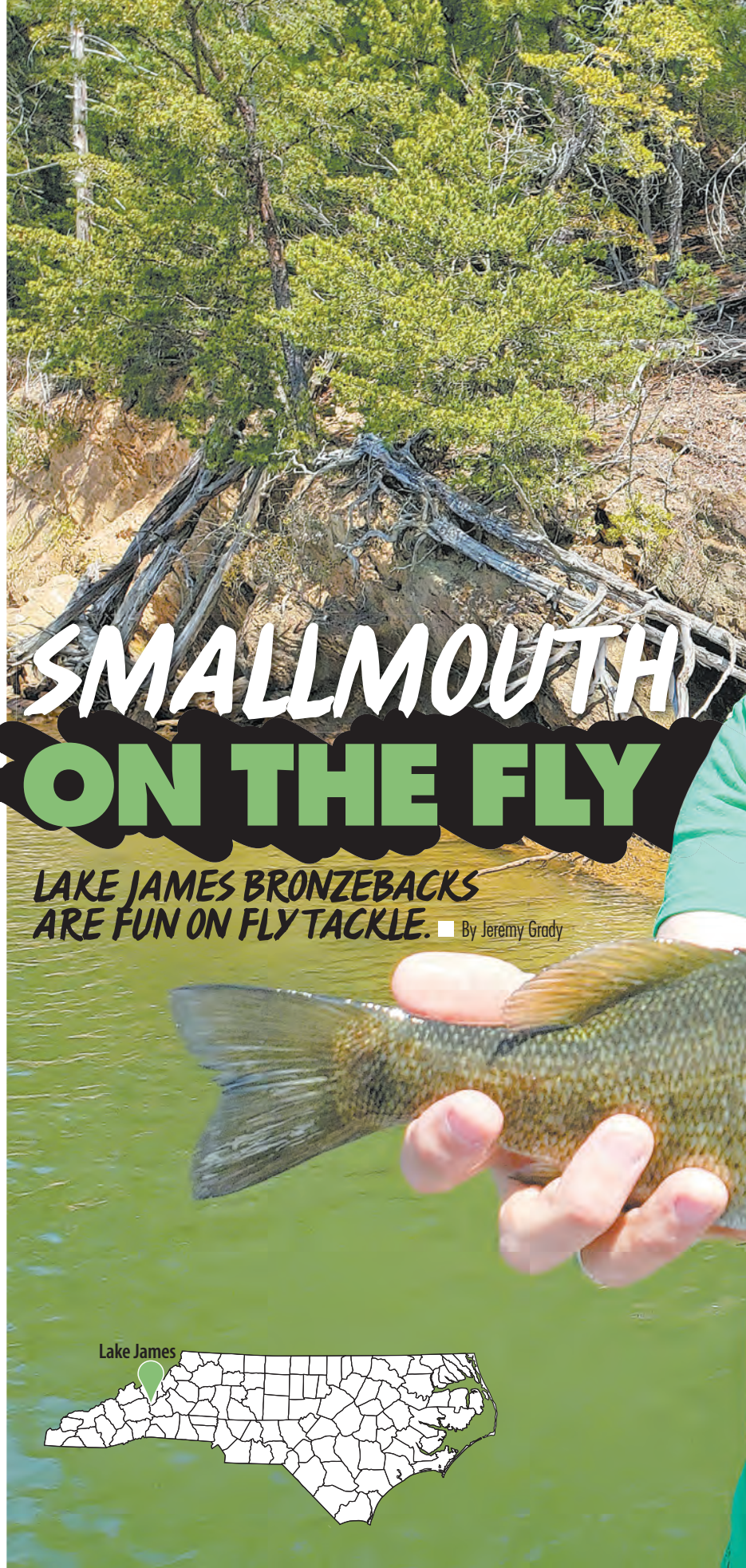
Start by looking for them on the main channel, points and secondary points. Also, as weird as it sounds, concentrating on sunny banks can pay off. Maybe the fish can see the fly better, or maybe it's a degree or two warmer, but sunny banks seems to produce best.

Any kind of brush is also a good place to find a bass. And they'll be on rock piles or stumps too. Not many smallmouths are back in the coves, but largemouth will be there, and they'll hit a fly also. Finding areas with the clearest water is the key.

This time of year, some wind combined with boat traffic can dirty up the creek banks. Smallmouth bass are sight feeders, and flies usually don't make any noise. So it may be harder for fish to find them in those dingy areas.

Anglers who stand while running the trolling motor can look down to see deeper in the water. They can watch the fly, see how fast to fish it, and see when the fish comes up to eat it. A good pair of polarized sunglasses helps when watching everything the fly is doing.

STAY IN THE STRIKE ZONE >





Anglers find smallmouth in a variety of locales on Lake James.

STAY IN THE STRIKE ZONE

Start by casting the fly to the bank over brush or any type of cover. Subsurface flies that are slightly weighted sink slowly so they are good choices. Stripping the fly just fast enough in foot-long pulls ensures it doesn't get hung up. Once clear of the brush, let the fly sink for a couple of seconds off the end. Some big bass are caught doing this. So it's always worth those few seconds. The fly is in the strike zone for the length of the tree.

As soon as it clears, casting to the next spot puts it immediately in the strike zone again. So the fly is slowly moving, and constantly in the strike zone. This is one way to cover surprising amounts of water while exposing the fly to more fish.

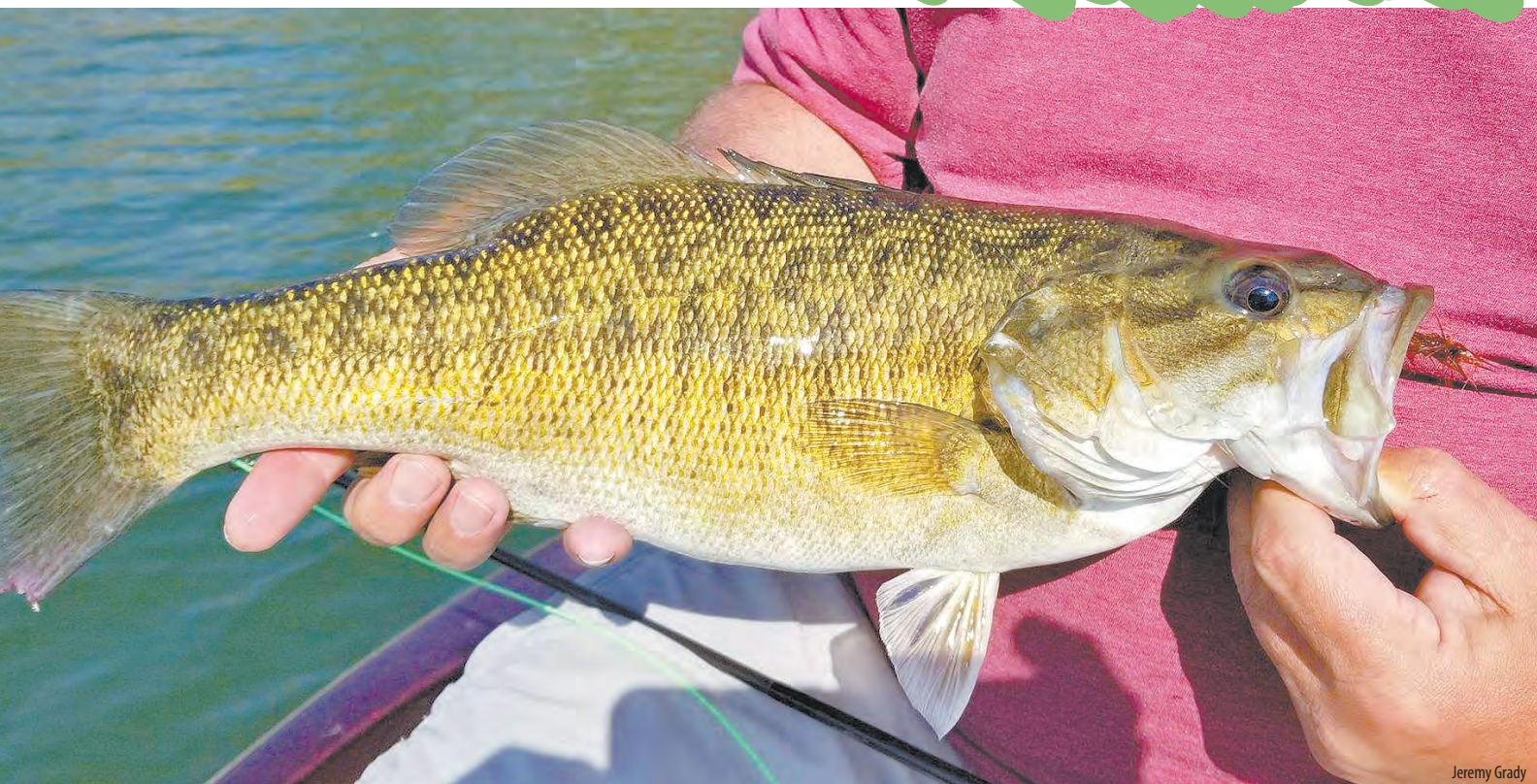
The strike is sometimes immediate. But sometimes the fish comes out slower and inhales it. When this happens, especially if it's a bigger fish, wait long enough to see his jaws close on the fly before setting. Otherwise it often results in a miss. When a nice bass comes to eat the fly, it'll make an angler's heart skip a beat. If you miss him but not sting him, the fish may bite again right away or a little later. This is a good opportunity to cast a different lure. Either way, the fly exposed the fish.

Once hooked, smallmouth are relentless. They'll first run back into the brush. Steering him out greatly improves the odds of him making it to the net.

Many anglers don't realize the leverage a fly rod offers. That fish has 8 to 9 feet of rod to battle, and in open water, if the hook has enough tissue in the mouth, an angler will usually boat him. Sometimes if he eats the fly and he's still in brush, he's likely to get wrapped up. It happens sometimes, that's part of it.



Anglers don't need to use heavy gear when casting for smallmouth on Lake James. **BELOW:** This smallmouth looks docile, but when hooked, it put up a valiant fight.



Jeremy Grady



Standard colors are suitable for Lake James smallmouth in the spring.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

An 8-pound tippet may sound light, the fly sinks better, and that size tippet is harder for fish to see. The key to using this sized tippet effectively is keeping a sharp eye on it. Any nick or abrasion significantly reduces the poundage. Anglers can apply a surprising amount of pressure as long as the line and tippet are free of kinks or cuts.

Surface flies are popular, and they'll work. But this time of year, subsurface is hard to beat. A small stock of flies is all that's necessary. Some sort of soft breathing streamer, that you can watch is good to have. Woolly Buggers in sizes 4 and 6 are hard to beat.

Black, brown, red, purple, olive, white, chartreuse, and combinations of these colors are all good bets. By far, the old standby is black; it's easy to see. And it appears to bass as an easy meal. It also may trigger a protective response due to the time of year.

Another good fly is a Zonker in colors white or black and in the same sizes. A marabou streamer in white, or white and chartreuse, in the same sizes also. This color combination is especially good if the water is a little dingy. Slightly weighted versions are best.

These fish see so many different lures this time of year, and flies offer something totally different. They offer actions that aren't replicated with conventional bass fishing tackle.

Maybe that's why they are so effective. When it's time for a different (and thrilling) method of pursuing smallmouths, fly fishing is the way to go. ■



Jeremy Grady lives in Morganton, N.C. and is an avid hunter and angler. He's been writing about his outdoor adventures for years.

GEARING UP FOR SMALLIES ➤

NO WHERE TO HIDE

Designed by Aaron Martens, Gamakatsu has developed the G-Power Flip and Punch Hook. A step up from the G-Finesse Heavy Cover Hook, for serious flipping and punching with heavy fluorocarbon and braid. The Tournament Grade Wire hook, paired with its welded eye, make this one of the strongest hooks in Gamakatsu's G-Series lineup. Ideal for larger baits and weights, punching through grass mats and flipping into heavy timber. G-Power Flip and Punch ideally matches to all types of cover and able to withstand extreme conditions.



G-POWER FLIP & PUNCH HOOK



SEE IT IN ACTION!



SCAN HERE.



AARON MARTENS



GAMAKATSU.COM

GEARING UP FOR LAKE JAMES SMALLIES

Traditional fly rods for bass are usually 7 and 8 weight. But many anglers prefer something slightly lighter for these smallmouth. Fly rods around 8 or 9 feet long with line weights of 5 or 6 weight are good choices. These light lines will throw the weighted streamers adequately. The key to allowing the rod to throw these flies is to allow a split second on the back cast to "load" the rod for making the next cast. False casting while fishing down a bank isn't always the preferred method. Stripping the fly out to the end of the brush or structure, letting it sink a second or two, then picking up and casting again is a good bet. But false casting to achieve a little more distance is sometimes required.

It's a good rule to keep a tapered 3x or 8-pound leader about as long as the rod. Knotted leaders tend to turn over these flies a little better than tapered ones. If using various line weights, ranging from 25 pounds stepping down to 8 pounds will work. With

stiff monofilament such as Maxima, tie the 25-pound, 20-pound, and 15-pound in sections in about 15 inches each. With monofilament such as Stren, tie a piece of 12-pound about 10 inches, 10-pound about 15 inches, and 8-pound about 20 inches.

Keep a check on the leader and tippet. Any nick or abrasion anywhere on it weakens it significantly. Unfortunately, anglers often get caught up in the moment of fishing and sometimes don't pay attention to tackle until it's too late. It's best to retie tippets and have fresh knots before even getting to the lake. ■

SANTEE STRINGER >

Don't forget a net when chasing bronzebacks.





Hobie®

TIME TO GET REEL

MIRAGE® OUTBACK

THE WORLD'S #1 PEDAL FISHING KAYAK

ONLY THE BEST MAKE IT OUT HERE. This fully-loaded fishing machine is built for every conceivable fishing expedition, whether you're prowling the ocean for monster gamefish or stalking bass in your favorite freshwater fishing hole. Powered by the MirageDrive 180 with Kick-Up Turbo Fins, this fine-tuned angling vessel is highly versatile, fast, quiet, and exceedingly nimble. Combating drift and navigating tough waters has never been easier.

hobie.com

SANTEE STRINGER

Terry Madewell

Guide Scott Cole said April is prime time to catch cats from shallow water, and day or night can be productive.



SKINNY WATER FAT CATS

HEAD TO THE SHALLOWS FOR HOT CATFISH ACTION THIS MONTH

April is a prime month for shallow water fishing action at Santee Cooper and this skinny water holds some really “fat cats.” As multiple species of smaller fish flood into the Santee Cooper shallows, big blue and flathead catfish follow.

SKINNY WATER HOTSPOTS

Scott Cole is a USCG licensed fishing guide out of Blacks Camp with 30 years of experience chasing big catfish on lakes Marion and Moultrie.

“I love April catfishing because it’s big-fish time in shallow water,” Cole said. “We catch big fish year-round. But during April and May, trophy catfish get into shallow water in big numbers. And it’s prime time to get your string stretched by a huge catfish.”

Cole (704-472-4450) said the overall key to fishing success is shallow water,

often back in the flats in and around cypress trees.

“I like to have some slightly deeper water nearby,” he said. “The proximity of deeper water provides more consistent fishing action. Even the slight depth difference attracts the biggest catfish better than anchoring in the back end of a long, shallow flat with the same depth of water everywhere.”

“My favorite scenario is to fish a 3- to 4-foot hole or stretch of water surrounded by a 2-foot deep flat,” he said. “The site could be an old pond location inundated by the lake or a deeper ditch coursing through the flat. The ditch serves as a perfect funnel, to use deer hunting vernacular. These catfish roam the shallow water seeking the abundant forage available at this time of the year.”

SKINNY SETUP

Unlike when pursuing cats in the open, deeper water where he’ll drift fish, Cole

said it’s much more productive to anchor fish in the shallows.

“I use the ‘poor man’s power-poles’ to anchor my boat,” he said. “I have long poles that I run through pole holders of a slightly larger diameter placed around my pontoon boat. I bury the poles into the bottom substrate and this eliminates swaying of the boat from wind or wakes from passing boats.”

Cole said fish are caught by day but he prefers to fish at night because bigger fish are more likely to be caught. He’ll leave Blacks Camp early enough to set up at his first location prior to dark.

“Both lakes Marion or Moultrie are excellent choices. I’ve got plenty of



Terry Madewell, of Ridgeway, S.C., has been an outdoors writer for more than 30 years. He has a degree in wildlife and fisheries management and has a long career as a professional wildlife biologist/natural resources manager.

proven places in both lakes for big fish,” he said. “The key is usually the weather. If the weather pattern favors one lake or location that’s where I’ll go. A recent, strong bite in a particular area is always a good bet. But remember, these localized hot spots can change regularly.”

“Sometimes we’ll get a good flurry of action right at dusk. But generally once it gets dark, we’ll begin to pick up larger fish,” he said. “April, shallow water and darkness are a three-point recipe for big fish success.”

Cole uses multiple rods, depending on the number of anglers on the boat. But typically he’ll employ at least 8 rigs. He’ll fan cast them around the boat to cover as much water as possible.

“I’m usually within casting distance of some cypress trees and I’ll cast at least a couple of the rigs right up against the roots of those trees,” he said. “Big cats will be around those places looking for bream, shad or perch — anything they can eat.”

BAITS AND MOBILITY

Cole said blue catfish are most commonly caught but flatheads are taken too, more often at night. He uses an assortment of bait types until he patterns what the fish want, with bream, perch, shad and mullet all on the basic menu.

“Sometimes they all produce, sometimes one will be the flavor of the trip so I’ll bring plenty of each,” he said. “But anything these fish may already be eating in the shallows is a good bet.”

Cole moves to different locations if he’s not getting bites. He’ll fish an area a minimum of an hour at night, usually more.

“When I find catfish on a good bite, hopefully at the first place we stop, I’ll stay until the action slows,” he said. “If we catch three or four good-sized catfish from that spot and then the bite slows, my confidence level will be high and I’ll give that place another hour. I’ve seen the action wane and then another burst of big catfish action occurs. Big cats are on the prowl so patience is a real asset.

“If fishing action slows, I won’t hesitate to pick up and hunt for big fish,” he said. “A good bite is happening somewhere and my goal is to be a part of that action.” ■

LUNKER LINES ➤

ANCHOR DOWN TIGHT:

Anchor ropes stretch and give, and often allow the boat to move around too much for fishing. Sliding metal poles through holders fastened to the side of the boat, then securing those poles in the lake’s bottom will keep your boat free of movement.



Big flatheads are among several species of catfish anglers can catch at night this month at Santee.

Plan Now & Spring Forward!

Warmer Days Are Ahead Of Us... Call For Our 2022 Travel Guide!







SANTEE COOPER COUNTRY

FISHSANTEE.COOPERCOUNTRY.COM

803-854-2131

FOLLOW US ON

In April, anglers can choose where they want to fish, and what technique they want to use.



OPTIONS ABOUND

BASS ARE IN EVERY STAGE OF THE SPAWN, AND BITING A VARIETY OF LURES

I love bass fishing in February and March because I think those are the two best months to catch a truly big fish. But I love April, because here in the Carolinas, you can catch so many bass so many different ways. It is the one month when you can typically find fish in all three stages of the spawn.

You can target fish in prespawn, fish that are on the beds that you can sight-fish, and also post-spawn fish. You pick which fish you want to fish for, the section of lake you like to fish, and you fish the way you want.

If you are fishing a tournament, prespawn and spawning fish are what you are looking for, because they are typically going to weigh more. But fishing for post-spawn fish is a lot of fun. And when I'm out just fun-fishing, those are the fish that I'll very often choose to target.

For one thing, you're catching them on topwater hard baits, floating worms, those kinds of baits. And most people know I love to topwater fish. I'll target

post-spawn fish with topwaters like poppers, prop baits like an X-Prop or floating frogs – popping and walking frogs. A lot of fish are guarding fry, and the fry are going to be within a couple of inches of the surface.

TAKE YOUR PICK

When you set out to choose how you plan to fish this month, and which fish you target, the section of lake you're fishing will typically determine which fish you fish for. The lower end of a lake, and the north side of that end, is the place where you'll see your first spawning fish, and the first ones that are finished and have moved to a post-spawn pattern. The middle of the lake, you have a better chance of finding fish on the beds, and in the upper end, that's where you'll have more prespawn fish, because the water is cooler coming into that part of the lake and the spawn is later.

If I am putting in on the lower end and want to fish there, I'll be looking for post-spawn fish, because a lot of fish

will have already spawned sometime in April. They'll still be in the creeks, in the backs of the creeks. Water clarity will dictate, to some extent, where the fry go and where the bass protecting the fry go. The fry will usually stay in the backs of the creeks until they get some age. I like topwaters like poppers and prob baits; I like to fish a Senko weightless at the surface or on a light Texas rig, maybe 1/8- or 1/16-ounce. I use a green pumpkin Senko most of the time. But in post spawn, I will go with green and purple flake, even white. Fish get so protective of the fry, so aggressive, that a bright color will sometimes get them to hit a bait.

If I am putting in on the upper end of a lake, or fishing a tournament, I'm going to want to fish for prespawn fish, the



Davy Hite of Ninety Six, S.C. is a two-time BASS Angler of the Year who won the 1999 Bassmasters Classic and 1998 FLW Tour Championship. He is sponsored by Phoenix, Yamaha, Bass Pro Shops, Rapala, Buckeye, VMC, Humminbird, War Eagle and Yamamoto.

ones that are staging, looking and waiting for conditions to be right for them to head to the bank. Targeting prespawn fish, I want to cover a lot of water. I like to fish crankbaits, a Rapala DT-6 or DT-8, in crawfish colors: reds, oranges and yellows.

CLEAR WATER IS KEY

In a lot of our lakes in the Carolinas, some fish won't spawn until May. I'm going to fish the upper end, stay on the main river where creek channels swing close to shallow water. When the fish make their move, they're going to be close to the place they're going to spawn. They won't be far from creeks. A lot of them are going to spawn in short pockets, close to where the river swings close – short pockets with deep-water access.

If I want to fish for spawning bass, I'm going to be around the mid-lake area, and the thing I look for is clear water. If you're

fishing in stained water, you can't see fish on the beds and sight-fish for them. You have to have clear water, so look for it in the backs of pockets and other places you find bedding fish. When I sight-fish, I'm going to throw a wacky-rigged Senko, a light Texas-rigged Senko or a creature bait like a Yamamoto Flapp'n Hog.

So, get a game plan in mind when you head to the lake in April. You can fish to your strength, because somewhere on that lake, bass will be ready to bite. Actually, it's a time to fish shallow for most-every gamefish: crappie, bluegill, bass. All of them will be in 10 feet of water or less. It's a great time to be on the water. One thing we do have to deal with is yellow-pine pollen that's all around, but that's all. This month, nothing should stop you from putting some bass in your livewell. ■

MURRAY STRIPERS ➤

Crankbaits in crawfish colors are unbeatable this month for largemouth bass.



Creature baits fished in shallow water are tough for bedding bass to ignore.



Springtime stripers bite readily for anglers on Lake Murray.

STRIPERS ON MURRAY

Big numbers of quality fish at midlands lake

A By Pat Robertson
 pril is the time when striped bass in Lake Murray move from winter to summer habits and habitat, according to veteran striper guide Terry Caulder (<http://catch22striperguideservice.com/>) of Little Mountain, S.C.

"During April you can have both patterns going on at the same time," said Caulder who has been a guide on the lake for nearly three decades. "Everything hinges on the water temperature, which starts coming up in mid-March and stays up through the summer. The water temperature starts coming up good in April."

By April the fish that migrated up the lake for the winter will begin their migration back down the lake to the main pool area. Not all stripers move up the lake for winter. Some stay all their lives down in the big pool, Caulder said.

The primary forage for the fish in winter is threadfin shad up to about 2 inches, which dominate in the upper lake at that time. But as the fish move to the lower lake they shift to the larger blueback herring, he said.

"As the fish migrate down they will move into creeks and channels for about a month and then they start out into the deeper water around the underwater humps. They will start in 40 feet of water and move to 60 to 80 feet by the end of the month."



QUANTITY AND QUALITY

For Caulder, striper fishing is mostly a downline bite with blueback herring this time of year because he is targeting numbers of fish for his guide parties. As the water warms the fish begin to school up, he said, though not necessarily on top, and they

will be associated with the baitfish. Good electronics are a necessity for this type of fishing, he noted.

"In deep water you are fishing off your electronics and the way electronics have got today it is pretty sophisticated," he said.

He primarily targets numbers of fish. But April is also an excellent month to land a big striper in Lake Murray, especially the first part of the month, Caulder said.

"A lot of people are still pulling baits for big stripers and if I were not fishing for numbers, I would be pulling, too," he said.

To contact Caulder's Catch 22 Striper Guide Service, call him at (803) 600-8078 or email him at advantage0579@gmail.com. Check him out on Facebook with: Catch 22 Striper Guide Service Captain Terry Caulder. ■

HEAD FOR THE MOUNTAINS ➤

**PIG COOKERS, PATIO GRILLS, SMOKERS
 CUSTOMIZED BBQ TRAILERS**

CUSTOM BUILT
 QUALITY
 OUTDOOR
 BBQ PRODUCTS
 SINCE 1989

BQ GRILLS

MORE INFO? 1-252-236-4464 | WWW.BQGRILLS.COM | 6043 HWY 301N, ELM CITY NC

2022 SOUTH CAROLINA FISHING REGULATIONS

Not an official document. Refer to SCNDR's official fishing regulations pamphlet or www.dnr.sc.gov.

2022 NORTH CAROLINA FISHING REGULATIONS

Not an official document. Refer to official fishing regs at NCWRC and NCDMF websites.

SALTWATER

STATE COASTAL WATERS REGULATIONS (0 - 3 miles)

FISH SPECIES	Minimum Lengths	Creel Limit (per person)
Greater amberjack	28" FL	1/day
Blue marlin	99" LJFL	1/day
White marlin	66" LJFL	1/day
Sailfish	63" LJFL	1/day
Sharks	%	%
Cobia	36" FL	1/day&
Bluefish	None	15/day
Black drum	14" minimum 27" maximum TL	5/day
Redfish (red drum, channel bass)	15" minimum 23" maximum TL	2/day
Flounder (state waters)	16" TL	5/day, 10 per boat
Groupers (black and gag)	24" TL	1/day
Red, scamp, yellowfin, yellowmouth	20" TL	3/day
Speckled hind/Warsaw grouper	closed	closed
Red porgy (aka silver snapper, pinky)	14" TL	3/day#
King mackerel	24" FL	3/day
Spanish mackerel	12" FL	15/day
Sheepshead	14"	10/day (30 per boat)
Spadefish	None	20/day (agg. grouper)
Black sea bass	13"	7/day
Dolphin	20" FL	10/day (60 per boat)
Yellowfin tuna	27" CFL	3/day
Bluefin/Bigeye tuna	Contact NMFS (http://www.nmfspermits.com)	
Tarpon	77" FL	1/day
Spotted sea trout (speckled)	14"	10/day
Weakfish (gray trout)	12"	1/day
Wahoo	None	2/day
Gray, yellowtail, queen, cubera, dog, mahogany, schoolmaster snapper	12" TL	10/day#
Red snapper	closed	closed
Mutton snapper	16" TL (federal waters)	10/day
Vermillion snapper	12" TL	5/day

% For shark seasons, bag and size limits, contact NMFS Highly Migratory Species Division, 888-872-8862 or hmspermits.noaa.gov. # Check with the SAFMC at www.safmc.net or 843-571-4366. & Cobia, 1 per person per day up to 6 per boat. Closed May 1-31 south of Jeremy Inlet, 1 per person, up to 3 per boat, after June 1 south of Jeremy Inlet. # No more than 6 redfish per boat.

FRESHWATER

FISH Species (Inland waters)	Minimum Size Limit	Creel Limit (per day)
Crappie/Panfish +	None	30 bream (15 red-breast), 20 crappie
Largemouth, smallmouth, spotted, redeye, bass%	none largemouth 12" smallmouth	5 lg/sm/r, 15 spots
Channel catfish	No restrictions	None
Blue catfish	Only 2 fish longer than 32 inches per day	25 fish per day
Flathead catfish	No restrictions	None
Striped bass or hybrid bass	Varies by location&%	Varies by location&%
Mountain Trout	+	5
White bass	None	10 (except Sav. River)
Walleye and sauger+	None	8

TL=Total Length; LJFL=Lower jaw to middle of fork in tail; FL=Fork Length (tip of snout to middle of fork in tail); CFL=Curved Fork Length (measure of a line tracing contour of body from tip of upper jaw to fork of the tail).

+ See specific lake and river exceptions in SCDNR's Regulations Digest

% For lake-specific regulations, see the SCDNR's Regulations Digest or visit www.dnr.sc.gov. Keeper season in the Santee Cooper system is Oct. 1-June 15.

& In Lake Russell and its tributaries, the daily creel limit is two fish, only one of which may be more than 34 inches long.

SALTWATER

STATE COASTAL WATERS REGULATIONS (0 - 3 miles)

FISH SPECIES	Minimum Lengths	Creel Limit (per person)
Greater amberjack	28" FL	1/day
Blue marlin	99" LJFL	1/vessel/trip
White marlin	66" LJFL	1/vessel/trip
Sailfish	63" LJFL	1/day
Sharks	%	%
Cobia	36"	1 per day*
Bluefish	none	& 3/day 5/day
Red drum (channel bass, puppy drum)	18" min., 27" max.	1/day
Black drum	14" min., 25" max.	10/day
Flounder	Closed	Closed
Dolphin (mahi-mahi)	none	10/day
Groupers (black and gag)	24" TL	1/day
Red, scamp, yellowfin, yellowmouth	20" TL	3/day
Speckled hind/Warsaw Grouper	closed	closed
Wahoo	none	2/day
Red porgy (aka silver snapper, pinky)	14" TL	3/day
King mackerel	24" FL	3/day
Spanish mackerel	12" FL	15/day
Sea bass (north of Hatteras)	12.5" TL	15/day
Sea bass (south of Hatteras)	13" TL	7/day
Yellowfin/Bigeye tuna	27" CFL	3/day
Bluefin tuna	Contact NMFS (http://www.nmfspermits.com)	
Spotted sea trout (speckled)	14"	4/day
Weakfish (gray trout)	12" TL	1/day
Snappers: Gray (mangrove), yellowtail, queen, cubera, dog, mahogany, schoolmaster	12" TL	10/day in federal waters
Sheepshead	10"	10/day
Red snapper	closed	closed
Mutton snapper	16" TL (federal waters)	10/day
Vermillion snapper	12" TL	5/day
Striped bass ^	28"-35" TL max (ocean)	1/day
Hickory shad	None	10/day
American shad	closed	closed

^ see NCWRC/NCDMF regs for inshore Management Area limits. % Contact NMFS Highly Migratory Species, 888-872-8862, visit hmspermits.noaa.gov. % 5 bluefish per day for recreational anglers on for-hire or charter vessels; 3 bluefish per day otherwise. * 1 cobia per day, two per vessel for private vessels. 1 per day, up to 4 per vessel for-hire.

FRESHWATER

FISH Species (Inland waters)	Minimum Size Limit	Creel Limit (per day)
Crappie +	None +	None +
Largemouth, smallmouth, spotted bass +	14" (2-fish exception)	5
Channel catfish	No restrictions	None
Blue/Flathead catfish	No restrictions	None
Striped bass, hybrid (Bodie) %	20"	4 %
Sauger	15"	8
White bass	None	25
Walleye#	None	8
Muskellunge	42"	1
Kokanee salmon	None	7
Red drum	18" min., 27" max.	1
American and hickory shad	None	10 (1 American shad)
Spotted sea trout	14" min.	4
Flounder	Closed	Closed

TL=Total Length; LJFL=Lower jaw to middle of fork in tail; FL=Fork Length (tip of snout to middle of fork in tail); CFL=Curved Fork Length (measure of a line tracing contour of body from tip of upper jaw to fork of the tail)

+ See specific lake exceptions in NCWRC regulations digest or www.ncwildlife.org

% Striped bass creel limits and size minimums vary by lake. See NCWRC regulations digest or www.ncwildlife.org.

Lake James, minimum size is 15 inches. Lake Gaston, minimum size is 18 inches, creel limit 5.

@ Hook-and-line and flounder giggers restricted to 4 fish per day per trip, 15-inch size minimum.



THE JIG IS UP!

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM EURO-NYMPHING

Euro-nymphing is a unique technique, and anglers can learn something from the practice. A recent article by Allen Gardener (Ditch the Indicator) speaks extensively about not using indicators. Never being a fan of indicators, the article only confirmed my position on the use of them.

The exclusion of indicators is one of the prime benefits of Euro Nymphing, or “high-sticking” with a regular rod/line and no indicator.

Indicators increase the drag of the current and lift the nymph off the bottom, speeding up the drift. This is counter-productive to attracting and hooking trout.

I recall fishing on the Soque River in Georgia with the late Spider Littleton. He recommended using an indicator, and I did catch an 18-inch rainbow using one. When I removed the indicator, I went on to catch several 24-inch rainbows and lost a much larger fish later that day.

Indicators do have their place. When fishing very long casts, it may be the

only way to get a good drift. Once when fishing on the Yellowstone River for cut-throat trout, I found it necessary to use indicators. Also, fishing from drift boats may require indicators.

JIG HOOKS

Another thing Euro-nymphing teaches us is that jig hooks are great for tying nymphs. A jig hook with a bead head (preferably tungsten) will ride with the hook point up. When tied this way, the fly is less likely to snag on stream debris.

At Dodson Fishing Co., Steve Grose advised that they could not keep them in stock because their guides snapped them up. I ordered an assortment of 12 through 18 online. Later, they were available at Dodson, and I purchased some more in sizes 12 through 18, and some smaller tungsten beads.

After tying assorted sizes of nymphs, I have fished them twice, but due to the lack of recent stocking of streams where I fished, a fair evaluation has not been possible.

BENEFITS OF NO INDICATORS

- Less drag
- Extended drift
- Not having to constantly adjust depth. This is accomplished by lifting or lowering the rod tip.
- More hook-ups due to less slack in line or leader

“High sticking” is a good technique. When a cast is made upstream, the rod tip is lowered to allow the nymph to sink. As the nymph drops downstream, near your position, the rod tip is lifted. As it passes, drop the rod tip to extend the drift.

Using this technique, more water is covered, keeping the nymph in the visible



L. Woodrow Ross lives in South Carolina's Upstate, where he enjoys traditional archery hunting, fly-fishing and fly-tying, along with many other outdoor pursuits. He has written more than 500 newspaper columns, numerous magazine articles as well as 32 books available on Amazon Kindle.

zone longer.

FIRST FISH ON A FLY

It is a wonderful feeling to share the joy of fly fishing. My daughter and her family moved to Colorado a couple of years ago. As a transplanted Coloradan, she felt obligated to learn to fly fish. She has a rod, and I had provided an assortment of flies and poppers.

We went to a small pond in her community, and she fished diligently, even though the fishing was slow. She caught a bass on a popping bug, and now she is definitely a convert to the sport. She and her husband have discussed a drift boat trip in Wyoming, and it should be a great adventure.

NC WILDLIFE STOCKING SCHEDULE

Due to COVID-19, the 2021 stocking schedule was negatively affected. Some public trout waters were impacted and this has extended into early 2022. No trout were stocked in

early February and some of the streams did not see stocking until March.

Current plans call for more stocking in April and May, but stocking dates are subject to change. For up-to-date information, please visit ncwildlife.org/fishing/Hatcheries-Stocking.

Due to the lack of stocking of the streams, it is advisable to concentrate on streams that support reproduction of wild trout until a reliable stocking schedule is resumed.

SOUTH CAROLINA STOCKING

There has been some stocking in S.C. streams. One of the recent popular spots is the Saluda River near Columbia. Approximately, 30,000 trout in the 8- to 11-inch range are stocked each year. This is a tailwater fishery, below Lake Murray. The fish grow rapidly and can exceed 20 inches in two years after stocking. ■

Euro-nymphs have a bead head and are fished best when used without indicators.





FALL TRICKS FOR SPRING TROUT

■ By Jeff Burleson **TRY THESE FALL TACTICS FOR CATCHING SPRINGTIME SPECKS.**

Jeff Burleson

AS A COLD-BLOODED SPECIES, speckled trout get cranked up under springtime conditions.

Any small fish or shrimp perusing the inshore lairs are subject to a truncated lifespan when a fleet of hungry speckled trout awake from their winter slumber.

Speckled trout prefer cool — not cold — water temperatures. And the rise in springtime water temps can make the spring months hot and heavy for speck anglers in Carolina waters.

The change of seasons gets outdoorsmen a little excited, especially during the seasonal transition from the freezing winter to spring. Anglers can surely relate to a much-anticipated temperature change on and off the water. And speckled trout are in the same frame of mind.

The spring fishing season can closely mimic the fall frolic with respect to tactics and techniques, but with a few notable differences that anglers can easily overcome.

Speckled trout are a little more complex than other fish species when it comes to migration patterns. Some speckled trout migrate hundreds of miles each year traveling along the eastern seaboard heading to warmer or cooler climates. But although they are the exact same species, many other speckled trout never leave state waters. Or at least they don't appear to anyway. Scientists that spend many hours and years on these fish still lack a complete life history as it relates to local and large-scale migration patterns.

Speckled trout anglers are fortunate that all trout don't migrate into or away from their home fishing waters the same way each year. That leaves a substantial pool of fish to cast to on a free day off work. And for anglers with a boat and a box of lures, they can experience fall-like action during the spring season.

SHALLOW FLATS ARE KEY AREAS >

Specks will bite numerous artificial lures this time of year, including topwater offerings. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Springtime speckled trout fishing methods are very similar to those used in the fall.



Jeff Burleson

SHALLOW FLATS ARE KEY AREAS

Guide Jason Dail of Silver Spoon Charters and Stillwater Rods out of Wilmington, N.C. is an avid inshore guide, rod builder, and professional angler with a passion for redfish and speckled trout fishing. For Dail, the spring trout season is just as rewarding as the fall bite with quite a few similarities in techniques and tactics.

“We have a substantial resident population of trout that will overwinter in our waters in both highly tidal and areas with less tidal amplitude,” said Dail (910-540-0319). “North Carolina’s coastal waters are quite unique with much of the state’s inshore grounds lacking much tidal influence as compared to other coastal regions along the east coast. But the fish will typically respond similarly to rises in water temperature in the springtime.”

Per square mile, North Carolina contains a higher portion of low tidal waters and they are contained mostly in the waters associated with the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds. But as Dail said, these waters will fish similarly as water temperatures rise under spring conditions and bait becomes available.

In the spring, availability of forage species for trout and other inshore species is limited to small fish such as mud minnows, sand perch, menhaden, and some scattered mullet. In more tidal areas closer to the ocean, a run of glass minnows and a few other forage species can be available for trout in spring. But trout continue to feed in ambush style that is similar to the fall

season or any other time of year.

For Dail, his springtime fishing tactics are also similar to his autumn techniques by targeting fish at ambush positions along eddies and structure. However, the trout will be found within springtime locations.

LOOK FOR AGGRESSIVE BITES

“Trout overwinter up the creeks and in places with deep water refuges when the water is cold. As the water warms in spring, they come out of creeks to the flats in the creeks and as the water warms more, they will move into the main portion of the river along shallow flats,” he said.

The springtime weather can be shifty with warm days in the 70s and then back to near freezing temps in the same week. Trout are accustomed to this type of spring weather and will typically stay close to their winter holding areas with deep water. But the shallow flats with structure can produce excellent fishing opportunities during warm spells in the spring months.

“The fish are less lethargic in spring and they will have a good appetite after being relatively dormant all winter long. And with less bait available in spring as the summer and fall, trout will be aggressively feeding on any available bait that passes by,” he said. “Mummichog, sand perch, and some small menhaden and finger mullet are possible this time of year.”

As the weather warms up this month, anglers can ditch the heavy cold-weather gear for sweatshirts and hoodies.



Jeff Burleson



A spring day catching speckled trout is tough to beat.

TOPWATER CAN BE EFFECTIVE

An early arrival of white shrimp into the estuaries is possible. But shrimp typically don't migrate inland in true numbers until late spring. As a result, baitfish mimics are typically the best match-the-hatch imitations to use.

"I am throwing mostly MirrO lure 17MR and 18MR, Betts Halo Shad, and 4- to 6-inch Saltwater Assassin Sea Shads," Dail said.

The spring fishing season wouldn't be the same without a little surface action either. The topwater bite can be exceptional in the springtime.

"If the water warms up quickly in April and we have 55-degree water or better, topwater plugs such as Spook Jr.'s are effective. Those flats along the insides of creeks or in the main part of the rivers are excellent places to throw and get hooked up," he said.

The spring shift to warmer temperatures creates excitement for anglers and for their prized catches lurking within inshore estuaries of the Carolinas. Take fall tactics and deploy them under the spring conditions

to see why trout anglers get so excited during spring. ▀

ICW BANKS ARE HOTSPOTS ➤



Jeff Burleson is a native of Lumberton, N.C., who lives in Myrtle Beach, S.C. He graduated from N.C. State University with a degree in fisheries and wildlife sciences and is a certified biologist and professional forester for Southern Palmetto Environmental Consulting.

ABYSS BATTERY® Presents
POWER YOUR PURSUIT.

THE EAST COAST'S PREMIER
REDFISH MADNESS
TOURNAMENT SERIES
NORTH DIVISION
2022

3 EVENT POINTS SERIES
JUNE 4 JULY 9 JULY 30
SWANSBORO, NC

- \$400 PER EVENT
- TWO MAN TEAMS
- \$7500 FIRST PLACE
- 100% PAYBACK! *per event
- ARTIFICIAL ONLY

Top 3 Teams Advance to
The Redfish World Series
in Louisiana *location TBD

Hosted By:
Saltwater GRILL of SWANSBORO

@Redfish Madness redfish_madness2022

redfishmadness.com

For Information
Contact Mike Mattice:
910-459-0229
redfishmadness1@gmail.com

Woody banks near the ICW are always good spots to try for trout.



ICW BANKS ARE SPECKLED TROUT HOTSPOTS

Carolina anglers have thousands of acres of flooded jungles to target their speckled favorites. But one of the commonly overlooked places to catch trout is along the banks of the ICW. That's especially true for speckled trout in the springtime.

In certain parts of the Carolinas, trout will overwinter in the waterway and then feed along the banks during warm days in the spring. These ledges lined with grass, oysters, and other structures are excellent spring locales to find trout acclimating to the spring transition.

The ICW typically ranges from 15-25 feet deep throughout its range in the Carolinas. And much of it contains shallow shelves with a substantial amount of submerged structure along its banks. Trout can remain in the deep water on cold days and transition onto the shallow shelves when it warms up. And the bait will follow a similar pattern.

Most of the ICW contains docks, seawalls, and then natural wood and Spartina along its shores. Anywhere from the immediate shelf to the margin can have fish in an ambush position ready to commit.

Even in places where excellent spring trout habitat is abundant, the shallow shelves adjacent to the ICW should never be avoided, especially in the springtime. ■

SOUND & SEA ➤

**LIMITED QUANTITIES
WHEN THEY'RE GONE,
THEY'RE GONE!**

Carolina
SPORTSMAN

BACK ISSUES

shop.sportsmannetwork.com/collections/carolina-sportsman



New & Used Boat Sales - Consignment - Electronics & Accessories



Coastal Skiff 212

Coastal Skiff 171

Your Area Coastal Skiff & Coastal Flats Dealer



RELATIONSHIP BASED SERVICE YOU CAN TRUST!

13500 Hwy, US-70 BUS • Clayton, NC 27520 • 919-659-5096

www.carolinaboatco.com

www.CarolinaSportsman.com



Properly matching your tackle will ensure your catch rates remain high no matter what species you're after.



Chris Burrows

MATCH YOUR TACKLE

FROM ROD ACTION TO HOOK SIZE, DETAILS MATTER

When I made my living charter fishing, I got a lot of requests from customers to go fishing on their private boats. I always insisted on a quick tackle session to see what we were working with. I regularly saw one common mistake. Rigs for wahoo with 8/0 or 9/0 hooks would be on long, limber rods intended for king mackerel. Or live bait rigs with No. 4 treble hooks would be clipped on 30W reels.

These situations were the first step to increasing catch rates for these beginners. Matching your tackle from the rod butt all the way to the tip of the hook is important for whatever species you want to chase.

One of the more exciting catches I ever had as a charter captain was a rat blue marlin (maybe 125 pounds) on 15-pound test, essentially a live bait rod, 60-pound fluorocarbon leader, and a Matzuo 6/0 dink hook. The reel was set between 2

and 3 pounds of drag. All these details of the rigging are important here.

We were on a white-hot dolphin bite. And the farther I pushed offshore of the ledge, the larger the fish got, to a point where a 30-pounder was average. With some fairly competent anglers on board, I asked if one of them wanted to try for a 2-to-1 on line class, and they jumped at the opportunity.

RIG IT RIGHT

My mate Rob made a great rig with about 8 feet of doubled line from a Bimini, and spliced on the leader. And we switched out the flat lines for teasers. Less than 5 minutes later, we all saw the bill, switched the fish off of the teaser, got the bite, then cleared the whole spread as we chased a crazed marlin more than 10 miles around the Atlantic.

With the light drag setting, line breakage was never in question. And the lighter rod was able to provide enough

cushion to the whole system when the fish surged. Maybe most importantly, the hook was small enough (not to mention sharp enough) to get set in the fish's mouth, but large enough that it stayed in place for the duration of the fight.

If you want sustained angling success, match your rod size to the hook that you want to use, and then figure out the rest of the equation. The right rod (when there is an appropriate amount of drag on the reel) sets the hook and keeps it in.

Many saltwater anglers put a ton of effort and resources into acquiring their ideal boat and reels. And they often ignore important specifics when it comes to rods and hooks. This leads



Chris Burrows began his charter fishing career out of Charleston and Georgetown, SC, but moved to Brunswick County, NC in 2005. He currently runs Wing & Fish Company in Shallotte and is involved with fisheries management at the federal level, but still fishes recreationally whenever he gets a free second.

to decreased batting averages. Having the wrong rod or hook in play won't keep you from getting a bite. But if you can't get hooks consistently set in mouths, or protect that connection through the fight, you're not going to land many fish.

HOOK IT PROPERLY

I recently went trout fishing with a good friend on a gorgeous new bay boat. Every reel was a Shimano Stella. He had rigged all of his popping corks and leaders perfectly, and the 7'6" Star rods he chose were exactly what I like. But instead of my favored No. 6 treble (2x, in gold finish) at the end of the fluorocarbon, he had much larger, stronger, long-shanked hooks tied on.

Not wanting to be a jerk on a trip where I was a guest, I gave it a go. Of 12 solid bites, we caught a single fish. Most fish would stay hooked for a second, and then nothing. To me, live shrimp are too expensive to use as bait this way without some more positive results.

I finally switched to my preferred hook and got much better results. Needless to say, my friend stopped at the tackle store on the way home and hit the Eagle Claw rack hard.

CATCH MORE FISH

When it comes to the offshore world, I like dolphin fishing best of all. One reason is that you can have a blast catching them in so many ways. You can catch a good many dolphin on live bait rigs with two No. 4 or No. 6 trebles, on a live bait rod (20-pound class) and 2 pounds of drag on the reel.

My personal favorite way to catch them is on a dink rod (30-pound class) on a Matzuo dink hook (6/0) or Mustad 9174DT (5/0) hook. A bit stouter rod than before, so the reel (usually a TLD 20 or 25) should push about 4 - 4.5 pounds of drag.

You can pull even stouter, 50-pound class rods (you can use bigger baits here also) and use a Mustad 7692DT (8/0) with a mono rig or 7731DT (7/0) with No. 9 wire. In this case, your reel is probably a 30W or 50W and you might want to go as high as 8 to 9 pounds of strike drag. You are targeting the same fish, but you are matching your tackle up for maximum efficiency. Aside from using sharp hooks, fresh line, and good connections, matching the hook to the rod will make your catch rates soar. ■

OFFSHORE & INSHORE HOTSPOTS ➤

LOCKED & LOADED

Gear up for slabs with Millennium Marine's Spyderlok Rod Holders and Transport rack. Millennium's Spyderlok Rod Transport Rack keeps up to eight fishing rigs separated, secure, and ready for action. Spyderlok Rod Holders provide for ultimate rod position customization to keep you in the zone.



R-100 GEN2/R-200 SINGLE
SPYDERLOK



R-300 ROD
TRANSPORT RACK



MILLENNIUMMARINE.COM

Numerous species of offshore fish are willing to bite for anglers who make the trip to the Gulf Stream this month.



OFFSHORE SHINES

The spring offshore bite kicks off out of N.C.

T By Jerry Dilsaver

he run from the southern N.C. inlets to the Gulf Stream is long. But beginning in April, the fishing heats up faster than the water and a lot of fishermen look for weather windows to make the trip.

Several well-known locations offshore of the end of Frying Pan Shoals are great places to start the day. Their consistent productivity is evidenced by the fact they sometimes gather small crowds despite being more than 50 miles from the inlets. The positive side of these crowds is they are there because the fish are biting.

The most well-known spot is the Steeples, which is located between 30 and 100 fathoms on the upper edge of the break along the Continental Shelf approximately 20 miles south-southeast of Frying Pan Tower. Other well-known locations are the Same Ole, approximately 15 miles up the break to the northeast, the Blackjack Hole and 100/400 approximately 10 and 15

miles down the break to the southwest.

However, the best fishing may not be directly over these bottom areas, but a little off them where the Gulf Stream currents they interrupt create eddies and upwellings that carry grass and baitfish to the surface.

The first April fish are wahoo and blackfin tuna, which are followed by dolphin and occasionally yellowfin tuna.

Capt. Shane Kellett of Underdog Sportfishing Charters (www.facebook.com/underdogsportfishing, 910-617-0735) in Southport said he looks forward to this time of year when the ocean is warming and more fish are traveling the edges and breaks along the Gulf Stream. He said fishing is usually very good, with good numbers of wahoo and lots of blackfin tuna early, then adding dolphin later in the month.

Kellett said a growing number of yellowfin tuna have appeared in the catch for the past two years and he is hopeful even

more will show up this year.

"I check the offshore analysis websites and look for temperature breaks as they usually hold fish," Kellett said. "My records show we have been doing better in areas with higher chlorophyll, so I check that too. Once on site, color changes and the grass lines that form later in the month are also good places to find feeding fish."

"We begin trolling somewhere around 100-120 feet, once the water is 70 degrees or warmer. We troll 10-11 knots while headed out," Kellett said. "We catch some nice fish, especially wahoo, doing this. Once we find the temp break we're looking for, we slow to 5-6 knots and switch over to mostly sea witches rigged with ballyhoo, plus a couple of naked ballyhoo, on the surface and a planer line. I like to pull an Ilander behind the planer, but sometimes switch that out for a spoon and have caught a little of everything on it. ■"

OYSTER HIGHWAY

New River hotspot produces specks, redfish

T By Craig Holt
 he magic number is 50 for spotted seatrout in the New River.

"Fifty degrees is the number I like," said veteran Jacksonville angler Ricky Kellum (910-330-2745).

He's probed the New for specks since he was a tyke, fishing with his dad, the late Rendel Kellum, who caught the 1960s N.C.-record speck (11 pounds, 10 ounces).

Today he likes to fish near the New's Oyster Highway. That project, 10 football-field size areas holding oyster reefs and spats (baby oysters), was completed in 2019. Its main goal is to improve water quality but also provide homes for inshore saltwater sportfish and angling recreation.

"The oyster highway is my go-to spot, starting in late April and most of the summer," Kellum said.

Kellum caters to seasoned anglers who can cast artificial lures and novice live-bait fishers. His favorite artificials for trout include Zara Spook Juniors. He prefers those with a chartreuse head and white body or solid-bone color. But he always replaces factory hooks with No. 4, 4x treble hooks.

Big-shouldered New River redfish, ranging from 18 to 30 inches in length, often attack Spook Juniors cast for specks. They mangle factory hooks. He also uses MirrOlure MR 17s.

"MirrOlures in electric chicken (color) are good to cast upriver," Kellum said.

To handle trout (and reds), he uses a 7-foot Cashion medium-light fast-taper rod mated to a 2500 Series Florida Products Osprey reel spooled with 10-pound-test Beyond Braid and two feet of 20-pound-test monofilament leaders.

"If we don't have any cold-stun weather in late March, trout come out of the backs of creeks in April," Kellum said. "That's when I like to fish creek mouths such as Northeast and Wallace, the bypass bridge and beneath the N.C. 172 Bridge leading to the back gate (of Camp Lejeune)."

Kellum also targets shallow mud flats and bays where the spring sun warms dark bottoms and attracts baitfish and gamefish.

However, oyster clusters aren't easy to navigate with lures. "It took a while until I learned (how to fish) the oyster highway," Kellum said. "Trout will be concentrated away from the reef, 20 feet or so, while drum swim in the reefs. ■"

The New River's Oyster Highway is a hotspot for speckled trout, and big redfish also patrol the area.







Register as an AMSOIL Preferred Customer to receive:

- **Reduced Pricing** of up to 25% on every order.
- **Free Shipping** on orders of \$100 (\$130 Canada) or more.
- **Birthday Gift** of a \$5 coupon to help celebrate your day.
- **\$5 Back** with every \$100 you spend.
- **Exclusive Offers** throughout the year.
- **Free Membership** renewal when you spend \$500 or more.



Roger Farina • CALL (800) 781-8840 ext 1
tarheelsynthetics.com





Unashamed Adventures

SC INSHORE FIRES UP

Specks, redfish feed heavily in spring

By Brian Cope
 aitfish begin flooding back into South Carolina's inshore waters this month. And as the water continues to warm, the speckled trout and redfish get a little more aggressive. Capt. Stephen Flook of Unashamed Adventures said it's a great time to catch both species.

"The trout will be back in good numbers and they'll get more aggressive. The redfish will break up out of the big schools they've been in since winter, and the bite will continue to get better and better each day through the spring," said Flook (864-430-8830).

Winter fishing along the coast was quite good, but the bite will pick up this month.

The inshore fishing along South Carolina's coast gets better by the day throughout the spring.

"Bait is always scarce in the winter, and the fish have a very small selection. So as the bait returns in the spring and the water temps warm up, it will really get the trout and redfish fired up," he said.

With the redfish breaking out of their big schools, Flook said anglers will still find plenty willing to bite. They just won't be so bunched up in a few masses.

"The redfish will be more spread out. But you'll still find them if you focus on oyster bars, any place with current or structure. Any kind of points and docks, especially around the middle outgoing to low tide to an afternoon incoming are good times. As we move through spring, the water temperatures get warmer as the day goes on. So look for that afternoon bite to be a good one on

those tides," he said.

For bait, Flook said any kind of live bait is good. But he doesn't abandon artificials.

"This time of year, I'll always have some live bait with me. And I'll also throw Z-Man MinnowZ on 1/8-ounce Eye Strike Trout Eye jigheads. The slam shady is a good color. Tater salad and pearl blue glimmer are also colors I like to throw," he said.

Flook likes to pair those selections up with a 15- to 17-pound fluorocarbon leader tied to 10-pound braided mainline on a 7-foot, medium spinning rod. This time of year, he varies his retrieve until he finds what the fish want.

"I like to bump the bottom. Do a nice, slow, steady retrieve. Give it a couple of pops, a couple of twitches. If that doesn't work then we'll speed it up a little bit and try to keep it in the middle of the water column. This time of year, it can change from day to day, so you have to switch it up until you find where the fish are," he said. ■

Speckled trout are just as willing to bite as redfish, and some days they make up the bulk of the catch.



NEW MirrOlure® Mullet SKIN Series

MirrOlure expands its Skin Series with four NEW Mullet Patterns.

Available in popular MirrOdine, MirrOdine XL, MirrOmullet and Catch JR models.



"Surface Walker"

MirrOmullet
CS16MR-Mullet
3" Long, 3/8 Oz.



"Suspending Twitchbaits"

Catch Jr.
CS22MR-Mullet
3" Long, 3/8 Oz.



MirrOdine®
CS17MR-Mullet
2-5/8" Long, 3/8 Oz.



MirrOdine® XL
CS27MR-Mullet
3-1/8" Long, 9/16 Oz.

ORIGINAL
MirrOlure

L&S Bait Company

1415 East Bay Drive • Largo, Florida 33771
Tel 727-584-7691 • www.mirrOlure.com

LOW-FREQUENCY

Drones offer land managers a real-time look at their properties from whatever angle they choose.



GET A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

DRONES ARE GREAT LAND MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Hunting is a part of human civilization dating back to the beginning of time when humans first walked the planet. In the beginning, hunters were outnumbered by their prey. So managing the resource was far from their minds.

But as civilization developed and more consumers entered into the population, the thought of an endless pool of game was realized to be a false premise. Consumers needed to learn to manage their resources for sustainability.

Today, hunters and land managers on a government and personal level work together to effectively maintain rich habitats and plenty of game to go around.

The modern-day human lives and breathes with technological advances in just about everything we do. And hunting and land management activities aren't immune. But the advances in technology have improved the ability for people to connect better with nature and

to reach their natural resource goals.

Surely some aspects of technology have taken people away from nature, but many 21st century tools have shortened the gap between our goals and aspirations to improve and better understand hunting properties.

Hunters and land managers have used aerial photographs for decades to better understand their properties. But with the advent of consumer drone technology, the common hunter can afford a high-tech drone package to examine their properties from practically any altitude and in real time.

REAL-TIME VISION

Recreational drones are used by a wide range of folks from just a weekend hobbyist to professional videographers. The entry range price for drones starts at just a few hundred dollars and goes up to several thousands for a feasible unit that can be beneficial for hunters. For the

price of ammo, corn, gasoline, and other consumer products used for hunting on the rise, a drone package for \$350 seems like an inexpensive investment that is well worth the cost.

What can a drone really do for a hunter that an aerial photo from Google Earth can't provide? Well, aerial photos and a snapshot of various historical aerial photos from Google Earth are excellent resources for land managers. And they are also free. So, the ability to use online aerial images is excellent for hunters and landowners. But they still lack some of the unique features that a drone can offer.

First of all, the available aerial photos



Jeff Burleson is a native of Lumberton, N.C., who lives in Myrtle Beach, S.C. He graduated from N.C. State University and is a certified biologist and professional forester for Southern Palmetto Environmental Consulting.



are typically 2 to 3 years old, if not older. The aerial snapshots are taken at fixed periods. And the time of year these photos were taken can determine how usable the images are. Most of the time, the available images are dated and will not have the most current conditions of the property. Drone photography can provide real-time looks of the land.

GREAT FOR SCOUTING

Drones can take photos at any elevation as long as they are under 400 feet. Recreational users are limited to a 400-foot limit to prevent interference with regulated airspace. And drones can also take high resolution images and video up to 4K. So, the photo quality will always provide much more detail than the available online aerial images.

Drones can be used to monitor food plots throughout the growing season, water levels of beaver ponds and impoundments, and lots of other similar uses. Basically, users can surveil their properties from a single location and can collect photo and video evidence simultaneously.

In addition to basic photography and videos from the air. Land managers and hunters can fly over newly timbered areas and other forest stands to view the progress and pick out new areas to place a new stand or a place that shows a new pinch point between timbered areas and uncut stands of timber.

Drones offer the ability to scout new areas and look at the extent of properties and develop strategies for new hunting and habitat management opportunities.

Duck hunters can use them to scout for new areas holding water and maybe even ducks over the winter season. Often, hunters will walk in sometimes miles to look at an area that may be holding water. With the use of a drone, hunters can quickly look to see if the hole is currently flooded or not. This saves lots of time and aggravation. ■

**DRONES:
MORE THAN
PHOTOS ➤**

UNLIMITED USES:

At first, drones seems like just cool toys to capture photos with, but land managers can use them to assess storm damage, monitor food plots, check water levels of ponds, create maps and a whole host of other activities.



**ON A TRAILER OR LIFT...
WE KEEP YOU COVERED!**



**REMOVABLE
SAND BAG
WEIGHTS
AVAILABLE**

1-800-334-8277
2330 Womble-Brooks Rd.
Wilson, NC 27893



GREENER PASTURES

continued



Black's Camp on the Santee Cooper Lake System

**Deep Water Access
to Diversion Canal
and Both Lakes...**
Boat Launch is Protected From
Wind and Current.



Bait • Ice • Fuel Available

FOOD TO GO, ORDER ONLINE



Please
Call Us For
Campground
Lodging &
Guide Service
Availability

Cross, South Carolina 29436
(843) 753-2231
www.blackscamp.com

DRONES OFFER MORE THAN JUST PHOTOS

While drones offer the ability to take photos of the land from above, the photos will not be scalable or measurable alone without some level of enhancement or secondary processing.

But with the right software, drones offer much more than just photographs. They can become essential tools that provide a wealth of information that is much more valuable than a simple set of images.

Computer programs such as Drone Deploy enable users to take systematic samples at the

Aside from high-quality images, drones can also create scalable maps with proper measurements.

exact same elevation over a specified area. And the program will stitch them together to make a scalable and measurable map.

Drone Deploy and other similar programs make it easy for hunters and land managers to measure the size of existing and potential food plots, or to measure distances between bedding and feeding areas. They can even measure the distances between tree stands.

Technology is moving into every aspect of human life. And in some cases, it may not always

seem to make valid improvements. But in the outdoor world, some advances in technology are offering users benefits not previously available. And drones are one of those. Every landowner and hunter should look into investing in drone technology to gain information about their property from an aerial perspective in real time. ■

Your Pontoon Restoration Specialist

Ryan Stewart
366 Neeley St.,
Sumter, SC 29150

803-720-4105

www.ToonTimeSC.com
rstewart@toontimesc.com

@ToonTimeSC



**HUNTING/FISHING
SCRAPBOOK >**

12 ISSUES OF *Carolina* **SPORTSMAN**[®]

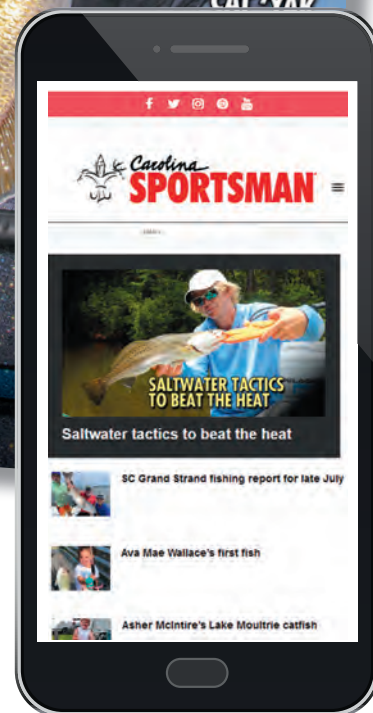
SUBSCRIBE TO NORTH & SOUTH CAROLINA'S TOP SOURCE FOR FISHING AND HUNTING INFORMATION

NEVER MISS
AN ISSUE

SUBSCRIBE TO GET OUR
MONTHLY PRINT MAGAZINE
AND FULL WEB ACCESS ON
ALL YOUR SMART DEVICES.

- FISHING HOTSPOTS
- HUNTING TACTICS
- LATEST MUST-HAVE GEAR
- EXPERT ADVICE

\$19.95
12 issues



To Subscribe call toll-free
1-855-224-1667

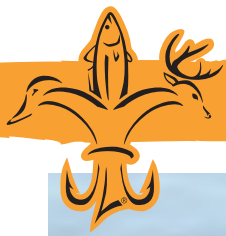
or for faster service visit

CarolinaSportsman.com/subscribe

www.CarolinaSportsman.com

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of first issue

April 2022 | Carolina Sportsman 69



HUNTING/FISHING SCRAPBOOK



Ayden Kaleel

Ayden Kaleel was hunting near the NC/VA state line when he killed his first swan.



Lance Burluson

Lance Burluson killed this 10-point buck in Stanly County on Nov. 24, 2021.



Angel Prevatt

Angel Prevatt caught this old drum from her Newport, N.C. dock on Oct. 2, 2021.



Ronnie Stewart

At 82-years-old, Ronnie Stewart still loves to catch sheepshead like this one from Manns Harbor, N.C.



Dakota Buckner

Dakota Buckner of Marshall, N.C. killed this raccoon in Madison County while hunting with his dad.



Athena Potts

Athena Potts of Fayetteville was hunting with her granddad when she killed this buck on Thanksgiving Day.

Take your camera **TO THE WOODS!**

Send us your photos, and you may appear on the pages of the most widely read outdoor magazine in the Carolinas. Send clean, sharp shots of you with your deer, ducks, rabbits, squirrels, doves, etc. to

**Hunting/Fishing Scrapbook,
Carolina Sportsman
5200 Borden Road**

**Rembert, SC 29128
or to images@CarolinaSportsman.com**

Digital images must be at least 500KB and in jpeg format. Print photos cannot be returned.



Jeffrey Stewart

Jeffrey Stewart and friends had a big day of rabbit hunting in Lancaster County during small game season.



Devin Hayes

Lumberton's Devin Hayes caught this mudfish a/k/a bowfin on the Lumber River, Dec. 31, 2021.



Chance and Colton Arnold

Chance and Colton Arnold were fishing a private lake in Guilford County when they caught these panfish.



Carlie Branham

While deer hunting in Calhoun County on Dec. 3, 2021, Carlie Branham harvested this coyote.



Jennifer Potts

Jennifer Potts of Goldsboro, N.C. was fishing near Beaufort Inlet when she caught this false albacore.



Kristopher Hill

Kristopher Hill bagged this beautiful fox squirrel in Anson County.



James Turner

James Turner killed this deer on private property in Travelers Rest, S.C.



Mason Martin

Mason Martin, 8-years-old, killed his first rabbit with a .410 while running beagles in Nash County.



HUNTING/FISHING SCRAPBOOK



Tyler Walston

Tyler Walston killed this fox squirrel in January during an Edgecombe County hunt.



Leah Grady

Leah Grady of Morehead City caught this 103-inch long bluefin tuna out of Bogue Inlet last fall.



Maxwell Smart

This big red drum bit a finger mullet for Maxwell Smart while he was fishing at Oak Island on Sept. 10, 2021.



Hudson Evans

Hudson Evans of Rocky Hock, N.C. killed his first duck during the 2021-22 waterfowl season.



Gary Partain

Gary Partain caught this bass in the Pasquotank River.



Don Reichard

Don Reichard caught this 8.2-pound sheephead at New Topsail Inlet on Nov. 28, 2021.



Ethan Quinn

Ethan Quinn of Goldsboro, N.C. caught this wahoo — his first — out of Beaufort Inlet.

GOT PHOTOS? WE WANT 'EM

Send us your photos, and you may appear on the pages of Carolina Sportsman magazine. Send clean, sharp shots of you with your fish, deer, ducks, rabbits, squirrels, doves, etc. to

Hunting/Fishing Scrapbook

Carolina Sportsman
5200 Borden Road

Rembert, SC 29128
or to images@CarolinaSportsman.com

Digital images must be at least 500KB and in jpeg format. Print photos cannot be returned.

GUIDES & CHARTERS

Display Ads

1/16 Page BW\$70/mn*

1/8 Page BW\$120/mn*

*Based on Pre-Paid 12 Month Contract

To place an ad in Guides & Charters
Bradley (NC) - 336.688.0273
 or bradleyh@carolinasportsman.com

Stephen (SC) - 919.522.8667
 or stevel@carolinasportsman.com

ADVERTISE

Your Charter Boat or Guide Service here!

Reach 1000's of potential customers each month starting at

\$70

Call for details at **252.299.2138**

INSHORE

UNASHAMED ADVENTURES



REDS • TROUT FLOUNDER



CAPT. STEPHEN FLOOK
 McClellanville, SC
864-430-8830

 [WEBSITE: UnashamedAdventures.com](http://www.unashamedadventures.com) 

FRESHWATER

BLACK'S CAMP

Deep Water Access to Diversion Canal and Both Lakes... Boat Launch is Protected From Wind and Current

FOOD TO GO, ORDER ONLINE



Please Call Us For Campground, Lodging & Guide Service Availability

Cross, South Carolina 29436
(843) 753-2231
www.blackscamp.com

CLASSIFIEDS

Up to 25 words **\$19.95/mn** or \$45 for 3mns. Add a photo for \$10/mn

To place a classified ad
Call 1-800-538-4355
 Mon-Thurs 9-6 • Fri 9-2

Need Food Plots?

Let us do the chores of building and maintaining food plots so you can hunt.



WeBuildFoodPlots.com
 704-904-3851



BECOME A MEMBER

Get FULL web access on all your smart devices *and* our monthly print magazine

\$2.99 PER MONTH

VISIT: WWW.CAROLINASPORTSMAN.COM/SUBSCRIBE





Astro Tables is far more effective than "moon tables," because it takes into account critical solar energies as well as lunar.

- The "Best Days" column is based on the ever-changing positions of the sun and the moon, rating each day on a scale of 0 to 100. The higher the number, the more solar/lunar influence that day is experiencing (see "Value" column or corresponding black bars).
- The two Primary periods (Moon Overhead and Moon Underfoot) vary in length from one hour to three-and-one-half hours, depending on a number of important lunar cycles, such as how close the moon is to the earth that day and how high its orbit is. The solar symbols alert you to when a Primary period overlaps a major solar period (eg: Dawn, High-Noon, and Dusk). The secondary periods of Moonrise and Moonset last about one hour each... 30 minutes before and after the listed time. (See key at bottom of each month for more detail.)

- **Astro Tables** is a quick-reference version of its parent publication, the **PrimeTimes Wall Calendar**, which is recommended for those wishing more complete data on the best days and times to go fishing and hunting for the entire year (see "Available Products" below).

- **PrimeTimes'** forecasts are based on solar/lunar research at a leading college of astrophysics and our own research pond/wildlife area. Annual data is supplied by the U.S. Naval Observatory. All times are adjusted to the center of your time zone and for Daylight Saving Time.

AVAILABLE PRODUCTS:
 The 2022 PrimeTimes Wall Calendar. \$13.95 (plus \$4 s&h). Know the best days, best times, and their relative strengths for all of 2022 with this information-packed, full-color, 11-inch by 17-inch, graphic peaks

and-valleys forecaster. Includes rise and set times for the sun and moon, space to log your catches, "Timely Tips," plus fish and game symbols showing you each month's don't-miss periods. Also includes exclusive summary charts revealing the best and worst days of 2022, the year's best periods, a look ahead at 2023, and more. Comes with FREE 2022 Astro Tables pocket calendar, which sells separately for \$8.95, plus \$3 s&h. **Book:** "How to Know When to Go" by Rick Taylor. \$14.95 (plus \$4 s&h). 100 pages, 43 illustrations. A comprehensive look at the main factors influencing fish and game activity periods, plus how to devise an effective when-to-go game plan using any year's PrimeTimes calendars. Individual assessments of bass, panfish, deer, turkey, and more.

Ultimate PrimeTimes app for web and smartphone. 12 months. \$9.99
 The world's best forecaster allows you to fine-tune the peak times to your exact location, quarry, and even weather. Too many features to list here. For more details, please call us or visit our web site (see below).

SPECIAL PACKAGE OFFERS:
 #1: Wall Calendar, Astro Tables and "How to Know..." book.... \$19.95 (plus \$5 s&h).
 #2: Same as #1, plus App... \$28.95 (plus \$6 s&h).
 #3: Same as #2, minus book... \$22.95 (plus \$4 s&h).

Send to: PrimeTimes 2022 • Dept. LS • 2487 NW 75th Ave., Ste. 100 • Ankeny, IA 50023

For credit/debit card orders, call **515-964-5516**, or go online to **primetimes2.com** and click **Catalog**.

2022 APR		BEST DAYS		VALUE
POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCEL	
Fri 1				73
Sat 2				64

Sun 3				57
Mon 4				48
Tue 5				44
Wed 6				45
Thu 7				47
Fri 8				53
Sat 9				64

Sun 10				53
Mon 11				47
Tue 12				45
Wed 13				53
Thu 14				63
Fri 15				73
Sat 16				76

Sun 17				64
Mon 18				52
Tue 19				40
Wed 20				33
Thu 21				31
Fri 22				35
Sat 23				46

Sun 24				37
Mon 25				33
Tue 26				35
Wed 27				47
Thu 28				59
Fri 29				71
Sat 30				78

25 50 75
AVERAGE

For more, visit primetimes2.com

LUNAR PERIODS					TIMES OCCURRING AT NIGHT ARE SHADED	
MOON RISE	PRIMARY MOON OVERHEAD	MOON SET	PRIMARY MOON UNDERFOOT			
7:25 am	12:28 pm - 2:58 pm ☀	8:11 pm	12:21 am - 2:27 am	☾	New	
7:51 am	1:04 pm - 3:50 pm ☀	9:12 pm	12:53 am - 3:23 am	☾		
8:20 am	1:39 pm - 4:45 pm	10:13 pm	1:29 am - 4:15 am	☾		
8:50 am	2:18 pm - 5:38 pm	11:13 pm	2:04 am - 5:10 am	☾		
9:24 am	2:59 pm - 6:31 pm		2:43 am - 6:03 am	☾		
10:03 am	3:44 pm - 7:24 pm	12:12 am	3:24 am - 6:56 am	☾		
10:48 am	4:34 pm - 8:16 pm	1:09 am	4:09 am - 7:49 am	☾	Apogee	
11:37 am	5:24 pm - 9:06 pm ☀	2:03 am	4:59 am - 8:41 am ☀	☾	High	
12:32 pm	6:16 pm - 9:56 pm	2:51 am	5:49 am - 9:31 am ☀	☾	Half	
1:31 pm	7:10 pm - 10:40 pm	3:34 am	6:41 am - 10:21 am	☾		
2:32 pm	8:05 pm - 11:21 pm	4:12 am	7:35 am - 11:05 am	☾		
3:34 pm	9:00 pm - 12:01 am	4:46 am	8:30 am - 11:46 am	☾		
4:37 pm	9:56 pm - 12:36 am	5:16 am	9:25 am - 12:25 pm	☾		
5:42 pm	10:53 pm - 1:11 am	5:45 am	10:21 am - 1:01 pm	☾		
6:48 am	11:51 pm - Midnight	6:13 am	11:18 am - 1:36 pm ☀	☾		
7:55 pm	Midnight - 1:47 am	6:42 am	12:16 pm - 2:12 pm ☀	☾	Full	
9:06 pm	12:51 am - 2:27 am	7:14 am	1:16 pm - 2:52 pm ☀	☾		
10:20 pm	1:54 am - 3:10 am	7:49 am	2:19 pm - 3:35 pm	☾		
11:33 pm	2:59 am - 3:57 am	8:31 am	3:24 pm - 4:22 pm	☾	Perigee	
no period	4:05 am - 4:53 am	9:21 am	4:30 pm - 5:18 pm	☾		
12:43 am	5:11 am - 5:53 am	10:20 am	5:36 pm - 6:18 pm	☾	Low	
1:46 am	6:14 am - 6:56 am ☀	11:25 am	6:39 pm - 7:21 pm	☾		
2:40 am	7:09 am - 8:01 am ☀	12:35 pm	7:34 pm - 8:26 pm ☀	☾	Half	
3:24 am	7:58 am - 9:04 am	1:44 pm	8:23 pm - 9:29 pm	☾		
4:01 am	8:44 am - 10:02 am	2:52 pm	9:09 pm - 10:27 pm	☾		
4:32 am	9:22 am - 11:00 am	3:57 pm	9:47 pm - 11:25 pm	☾		
5:01 am	9:57 am - 11:55 am	4:59 pm	10:22 pm - 12:20 am	☾		
5:27 am	10:30 am - 12:48 pm	6:00 pm	10:55 pm - 1:13 am	☾		
5:54 am	11:03 am - 1:43 pm ☀	7:01 pm	11:28 pm - Midnight	☾		
6:21 am	11:36 am - 2:36 pm ☀	8:01 pm	Midnight - 2:08 am	☾	New	

ANY LUNAR PERIOD IS ENHANCED WHEN IT OVERLAPS A KEY SOLAR PERIOD. THE BEST OF THESE OVERLAPS ARE DESIGNATED BY THE SUN SYMBOLS:
 ☀ = DAWN ☀ = HIGH NOON ☀ = DUSK
 WHILE THE LESSER MOONRISE AND -SET OVERLAPS (ABOUT 30 MIN. BEFORE AND AFTER THE LISTED TIME) ARE DESIGNATED BY BOLD BLACK TYPE.

For more information and samples of PrimeTimes products, visit our web site: www.primetimes2.com



AMSOIL	63, 73	HOBIE CAT	45	STAR BRITE, INC	5
BLACK'S CAMP	68, 73	L & S BAIT COMPANY.....	65	SUZUKI MOTOR OF AMERICA, INC.....	26, 27
BLUE WAVE BOATS	33	MARINE WAREHOUSE	75	TOON TIME, LLC.....	68
BOST ARGO.....	21	MAROLINA MARKETING, INC.....	11	UNASHAMED ADVENTURES.....	73
BQ GRILLS	50	MILLENNIUM MARINE	61	VANCE COUNTY TDA.....	3
CAPPS TRAILERS	36	O'BRIAN TARPING SYSTEMS	67	XPRESS BY ALUMA-WELD, INC.	2
CAROLINA BOAT CO.....	59	PG & BOATGIRL SHOW	3		
CAROLINA COMPOSITES, LLC.....	76	RANNEWS FIRMINATOR	17		
CENTRAL CAROLINA HABITAT SOLUTIONS	73	REDFISH MADNESS	57		
CLIMAX GENERAL STORE / BUFFALO RIDGE JERKY... 35		SANTEE COOPER COUNTRY	47		
CROSS CREEK OUTDOOR SUPPLIES, LLC	16	SARAH JUDY'S INSURANCE AGENCY	38		
EXCEL BOATS	39	SPRO CORPORATION	31, 43		

Sportsman Back Issues XXX

Subscribe Today and SAVE XXX

WITH
MARINE
WAREHOUSE
CENTER



YOU'LL BE SURE
TO ENJOY LIFE
ON THE WATER.



With two boat dealerships serving the
Wilmington, NC and Charleston, SC area,
we're your one-stop shop for all your marine
needs. Visit us today to find everything you
need to get out and enjoy the water!



TRAILERS



OUTBOARDS



ACCESSORIES



SERVICE

910.799.1277

6921 Market St
Wilmington, NC



843.974.5353

3881 Savannah Hwy
Johns Island, SC

MARINEWAREHOUSECENTER.COM

Pioneer *BOATS*

PRESENTS THE



**Enjoy family, friends and fun at the
Captain's Meeting**

Saturday • April 30, 2022

Pioneer Boat Factory • Walterboro, SC • 1pm-4pm



The South Carolina Department Of Natural Resources will have their Boating Virtual Trainer on site for the whole family to enjoy!

Shop sponsor booths with tons of products showcased!

Feast on the tastiest local food with plenty of cold drinks available!

Awards Banquet

Sunday • May 29, 2022 • Pioneer Boat Factory • Walterboro, SC • 1pm-4pm

www.pioneerboats.com

www.scmahiseries.com