

# MSSA FREDERICK CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



Working to Provide a Unified Voice to Preserve and Protect the  
Rights, Tradition and the Future of Recreational Fishing!  
No Unity, No Voice, No Fish



The Official MSSA Frederick Chapter VHF Channel is 71

## President's Message

Whelp, half of the year has already flown by. But, the good news is.....we still have half of the year left that is full of some great chapter activities. Starting with this meeting, we have Shawn Kimbro, one of the Chesapeake's leading authorities on light tackle fishing. His presentation on jigging, tips and tricks of landing quality fish is a must to attend. Coupled with Specialized Bait's dynamite line of light tackle products, this is a meeting you do not want to miss if you are a light tackle enthusiast. This will be one of the most informative meetings we have this year, so, hope to see everyone there.

One topic of concern for all of us recreational fisherman is the proposed allocation reduction on the table. There seem to be a couple of different scenarios that may come to fruition. Each of you should have or will be receiving an email blast of the possible reductions that will affect our future. Please read it carefully. We will be monitoring these proposals closely and will provide updates as we become aware. Hopefully, they won't put too bad of a hurting on us recreational guys.

Some not too good news, the crabbing currently sucks. The potters and trot liners are struggling to make quality catches and the price/availability of crabs is far below typical standards. The good news is, our crab feast will still be held on September 13. Remember, the cost to attend will be higher than previous years. But, also remember, for each 10 raffle tickets you sell a free entry will be awarded. Please support all our chapter does for everyone by selling or at least purchasing 10 tickets. We will be looking for volunteers to help with this event at the August meeting.

Fish Hard!

Ed

## Next Meeting

**July 9, 2014**

Food Service begins @ 6:00 pm  
Meeting starts @ 7:15 pm

### **Speaker:**

#### **Speaker:**

**Shawn Kimbro**

Latest light tackle Chesapeake fishing reports and information

#### **Vendor:**

**Specialized Baits**

#### **Menu:**

Lasagna  
Garlic Bread  
Corn  
Garden Salad  
Cake

#### **June Winners:**

Fred Keene – Spinning Rod and Reel Combo  
Jim Stewart – 1 gal. of Salt-Away  
Emory Conner – Conventional Reel  
Jay Betts – Spreader Bar  
Kris Hafler – Squid-nation Squids  
Charlie Applebee – Crimpers and Squid  
Tom King – Squid-nation Squids  
Jim Bremer – Fighting Belt/Harness  
Kris Hafler – Tuna-ment Tee Shirt

#### **50/50 Raffle – \$130**

Dave King

#### **Attendance at Meeting:**

67

#### **Fredrick Moose Lodge**

828 E. Patrick St  
Frederick, Md. 21707

## Chapter News

### **MSSA 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Boat and Beach tournament**

The Beach N Boat Flounder tournament is designed for all anglers, even those fishing from shore, bridge, beach, or pier. While the most popular method in this tournament is by boat, we do have many anglers choosing to fish from land.

This is a one day tournament, and will be determined by the single heaviest flounder.

#### **Entry Fee:**

Member – \$50

Non-Member – \$60

#### **Two optional Skill Levels available:**

Single Heaviest Flounder – \$50

Single Heaviest Non-Flounder (no skate) – \$25

#### **Registration & Weigh Station**

August 23, 2014 at AKE Marine, Ocean City, MD

Day-of Registration (if not pre-registered):

6:00AM to 7:00AM

Fishing Hours: 7:00AM – 3:30PM

Weigh-In Hours: 3:00PM – 5:00PM

### **N.C. King Mackerel Tournament October 4-11, 2014**

We will have the details and sign-up sheets starting at the April meeting.

There are a limited number of rooms available so get your crew together and make plans for this now.

We will need a non-refundable \$50 deposit and a credit card number to hold your room and boat slip.

**Fishing Reports**

**Chincoteague Action**

By Charlie Koski

Tight lines.....

**Ocean City Action**

July 7th 2014

Water Temp: 71.6

Fishing Report by Sue Foster

Fishing this week saw some nice flounder! We had our first reports of croaker in the bay. We also had reports of Norfolk spot. The surf had some tasty kingfish along with some small croaker, bluefish, and sharks at night. Looks like some good flounder fishing at the Indian River Inlet as well! Offshore was pretty rough over the weekend, but before the weekend we had wahoo, dolphin and tuna. Closer inshore we had a some flounder, sea bass catches, some tautog, ling cod and triggerfish.

**Maryland DNR Fishing Report**

A great American weekend is quickly approaching and families and friends all over Maryland will be celebrating the 4th of July Holiday. There will be vacationer traffic for sure and those just driving home from work or errands will wistfully gaze at families headed on vacation and few things get a fisherman's mind going more than fishing rods or a canoe strapped to the roof of a passing vehicle or perhaps a trailered fishing boat. It would appear we will be seeing some weather later on this week so if you're going out on open water be sure to check local weather conditions. Everyone at the Fisheries Service wishes you and your family a safe and fun 4th of July weekend.

Last weekend we had a couple of extraordinary catches in the Ocean City area that just go to prove you never know what you might catch when you go fishing in Maryland. John Henry of Sunrise, Florida was fishing with friends at Little Gull Shoal off Ocean City and caught not one but two 75 lb Cobia which both surpass the old Atlantic Division State Record of 72 lbs. John Schaar of Cardiff, California was fishing with family on an Ocean City charter boat when he hauled in a 131 Wahoo which surpasses the current 111 lb state record. Both records are pending at this time waiting for the proper paperwork to be filed.

Saturday July 12th there is a fun youth fishing event to be held in Easton from 8:30 to 11:00 am at the ponds off of Glebe Road which are at the corner of Mistletoe Drive and Mary's Court and behind Aqua Pools. There will be volunteers to help introduce

young fishermen to fishing and tackle will be provided. The event is being sponsored by the local chapter of CCA and the Elks Club.

A summer pattern of fish behavior has fallen in place at the Conowingo Dam Pool and the lower Susquehanna River as daytime temperatures become a bit toasty. There is an early morning Striped Bass bite at the dam pool and casting topwater, crankbaits or swim shad lures may get you into some of the action. Pitching live eels or small White Perch out into the pool or river can also be a good choice. The dam is on a mid-day power generation cycle and water clarity has been good. There is a line of thunderstorms due to arrive late today or Thursday so watch for local heavy runoff possibilities.

Upper bay fishing prospects for Striped Bass continue to be very good this week.

Chumming has been very popular and some very nice fish are being caught although there are a fair percentage of slightly sub-legal fish in the chum slicks. Often letting your bait to sit on the bottom in the back of the slick will entice a larger fish to pick up a bait this time of the year. Love Point, the Triple Buoys, Swan Point and Podickory Point have been popular places to chum but any channel edge where a school of fish can be located is a good place to start chumming. Trolling is usually a good option and especially when the tide is not quite right for chumming; a combination of bucktails, swim shads and spoons have been good choices in tandem or behind umbrella rigs. Jigging has also been effective on channel edges and whenever a school of fish can be spotted on a depth finder suspended over structure.

The Bay Bridge piers and the sewer pipe just north of the bridge on the eastern side have been popular fishing destinations and continue to produce some nice Striped Bass. Jigging near the pier bases or drifting live Spot or cut baits in a chum slick has proven to be very successful ways to fish. Trolling along the sewer pipe and through the bridge supports has also been a good option.

In the middle bay region live lining Spot is quickly becoming the most popular method of fishing for Striped Bass and the Hill has become the destination; a very large fleet of boats can be seen there on weekends. The channel edge of 30' to 35' is the target depth. If a little more elbow room is to your liking there are Striped Bass holding along similar channel edges in other parts of the bay. The outside edge of Hackett's Bar, Thomas Point, the channel edges leading into Eastern Bay, the Clay Banks below Tilghman and the western edge of the shipping channel are all worth a look-see with your depth finder. Trolling along these areas and out in front of Chesapeake Beach

has been producing a nice grade of Striped Bass and Bluefish are starting to be caught also. Jigging over suspended fish along these same areas is also a productive way to catch Striped Bass and a lot of fun on light tackle. Nathan sent in this picture of his best fish the he and friends caught while live lining at the hill recently.

There has been a little bit of croaker action in the middle bay region but most of the croakers being caught are barely legal size. Channel edges in the lower sections of the region's major tidal rivers and shoal areas adjacent to bay channels are a good place to anchor up in the evenings or fish off a pier and enjoy some peace and quiet as well as bottom fishing. White Perch are available in all of the creeks and rivers throughout the region and can be caught near any kind of structure such as docks, channel edges or sunken wood. It is hard to beat bait such as bloodworms, small minnows or grass shrimp but spinners and small plastic jigs can be a lot of fun on light tackle. Shallow water fishing for Striped Bass is now an early morning and late evening endeavor and a high flood tide is very important for success.

Fishing in the lower bay region is undergoing changes as water temperature rise and more summer migrants move into the region. Perhaps one of the more obvious species are the Bluefish. They are showing up in chum slicks in the lower Potomac, the Middle Grounds, and trolling spreads throughout the region and as part of the mix for shallow water fishing and jigging. Most of the Bluefish are in the 1lb to 2 lb size range but larger Blues will be filling in shortly.

There is some success being reporting with chumming for a mix of Striped Bass and Bluefish in the lower Potomac, Buoy 72 and &72A, the Rock Piles north of Point Lookout and basically anywhere along channel edges where fish can be located on a depth finder. A lot of boats are trolling for their Striped Bass with spoons and bucktails. Live lining Spot is very effective when fish can be found holding along the 30' to 35' channel edges. Outside of Cove Point, Point No Point, Buoy 72, and Hooper's Island Light been a few of the places live lining Spot has been successful.

Croaker fishing has been good in the lower Patuxent and Potomac Rivers, Tangier Sound and near Hooper's Island. The best fishing tends to be in the evenings when the croakers move out of the deeper channel areas and up onto shallower shoal areas so the channel edges are a good place to be. Peeler crab, shrimp, squid and bloodworms are the baits being used and most of the croakers are in the 10" to 11" size range.

There are also some eating size Spot being caught and White Perch as well. In the lower Potomac, Blue Catfish can make a large portion of the fish being caught when bottom fishing; most are in the 4 lb to 6 lb size range and make for good eating.

Early morning and late evening shallow water fishing has been good on both sides of the bay for Striped Bass and Bluefish as well as large White Perch. On the eastern side of the bay along the marshes of Somerset County there is also a mix of Speckled Trout and Red Drum and the occasional flounder. Casting topwater lures and white Gulp Mullet lures are a favorite but drifting peeler crabs baits in some of the small channels and guts can pay off well. Smiley Hsu was casting stickbaits in the evening near Gravelly Point when he caught this nice Striped Bass.

Recreational crabbers should be careful not to promise too much when it comes to the traditional July 4th crab feast. Most crabbers are working hard to make a bushel in a mornings outing in the middle and lower bay regions. Some savvy tricks being used to increase catches has been to change baits every 2 hours or so, to check out different depths, use collapsible traps along with a trotline and making sure you have a good tide.

Up Water flows coming down the Susquehanna River from Pennsylvania are finally beginning to moderate and the Conowingo Dam is now on a mid-day generating schedule. Water temperatures and clarity are improving and better fishing for a variety of species is the result. Striped Bass are being caught from the dam pool to the mouth of the river. Swim shads and similar type soft plastic jigs as well as crankbaits have been favorites this week for bank and small boat fishermen. White Perch are still abundant in the river leading up to the dam and small jigs are the most popular lure anglers are using and some very nice Smallmouth Bass are also being caught on the perch jigs.

Water temperatures in the upper bay are approximately 70°F this week and although trolling is still popular for medium sized Striped Bass and a few large ones now and then; many are now beginning to switch over to chumming and jigging over suspended fish. Traditional chumming locations such as Podickory Point, Love Point and the Bay Bridge Piers are providing decent catches of Striped Bass on good running tides. Jigging around the Bay Bridge Piers has been productive and live lining spot up close to the piers is also a very good option.

Just a little farther south of the Bay Bridge Striped Bass are being caught by boats

trolling a mixed spread of medium and large bucktails around steep channel edges such as Bloody Point, Thomas Point and the western edge of the shipping channel out in front of Chesapeake Beach down to Parkers Creek. Medium sized Striped Bass are now making up the bulk of the catches but most boats are finding one or two large Striped Bass still in the area and willing to hit the larger lures. Chumming has been productive at Hackett's, the Hill and the Clay Banks as long as the tide is moving. Live lining spot is beginning to be more popular now that spot can be found in most of the tidal rivers in the region. Channel edges in about 30' of water are usually the first place to look and the action is on when fish are located on depth finders. Jigging over suspended Striped Bass is also popular this week at prominent channel edges and points and when breaking fish or slicks are encountered.

Black Drum are still being found on shoal areas such as Stone Rock and the James Island Flats and are being caught on soft crab baits and stout tackle. Spot have moved into most of the region's tidal rivers and creeks and their numbers will steadily increase in the coming weeks. Croakers are beginning to show up at the mouth of the Choptank River and Hackett's Bar but so far most have been small. It may take a few more weeks for them to fill in at traditional locations in the middle bay region. White Perch are being caught in the lower sections of the regions tidal rivers on lures and bottom rigs baited with grass shrimp, bloodworms or peeler crab. The perch and Spot provide a lot of fun fishing for kids and adults from the many docks and piers that dot the tidal creeks and rivers throughout the summer months. The shallow water fishery for Striped Bass and White Perch has also picked up in the past week and provides some fun and exciting fishing in the morning and evening hours. Most everyone likes to use topwater lures for the Striped Bass that result in explosive strikes but suspended jerkbaits and swim shads can also be a good alternative. Small spinners, spinnerbaits and Beetle Spins work fine for the White Perch.

The lower bay region has a wide variety of fishing opportunities this week as summer migrant species continue to move into the area and resident Striped Bass begin to actively chase bait schools and are generally more active. There is still good trolling success occurring for Striped Bass from Parker's Creek south to Point-No-Point on the western edge of the shipping channel. Most boats are pulling a mixed spread of medium and large sized bucktails since there are still some large fish over 30" being

caught. Most of the Striped Bass being caught are running between 18" and 26" and there is a portion of smaller fish and of course the bonus of catching a larger one that is still hanging around in the region.

Spot are readily available now in the region's tidal rivers and creeks so some fishermen are now beginning to explore favorite live lining locations such as Cove Point and Buoys 72 and 72A. It is anyone's guess where the Striped Bass will set up residence this summer; for years outside of the Gas Docks was the hot spot and last year it was the Hill off of Eastern Bay, time will tell.

Croaker and Spot numbers are increasing in many of the regions tidal rivers and sounds; many tend to be on the smaller size but some whopper sized croakers up to 18" are also being caught. Most fishermen are using peeler crab for the croakers and bloodworms for Spot this week. Some of the better places to catch them from a boat are the lower Patuxent River, the Potomac River from the Route 301 Bridge to Point Lookout, the lower Nanticoke River, off Taylor's Island and the Tangier/ Pocomoke Sound area.

Shallow water fishing for Striped Bass has been very good in the region and favorite spots such as Cedar Point and the Eastern Shore marshes have been providing fun fishing. On the eastern side of the bay a few Speckled Trout are showing up now and then and if the Red Drum are here most are keeping very quiet about it.

Recreational crabbers continue to see the best catches of crabs on the lower Eastern Shore tidal rivers and creeks. Most areas farther up the bay or on the western shore are not doing as well. There are also reports of a lot of small crabs chewing up baits and quite a few of the legal sized crabs are light. Reports from shedding houses on the middle and lower Eastern Shore report plenty of peelers are coming in from the commercial crabbers so fishing bait and soft crabs should be in good supply.

## Virginia Beach Action

By Dr. Julie Ball

The Independence Day weekend fishing could be a challenge after Hurricane Arthur makes a mess of things. But once we are back on track, expect flounder and cobia to be the main event.

The flatfish action really picked up this week before Arthur's arrival. But with muddy conditions after the storm, expect a delay in the action until the waters clear up. The quality is also improving; with several fish pushing to over 7-pounds boated this week. The bigger doormats are falling for live bait

presented near structure, while 1.5 to 2-ounce jig heads adorned with plastics or Gulps are a good choice for jigging around the piling bases. Strip baits are also responsible for some decent fish, especially along lower Bay channels and off the bend at the 3rd island of the CBBT. Rudee and Lynnhaven Inlets are giving up catches up to around 22-inches, especially for surf anglers wading near the Lesner Bridge.

Most anglers are still chasing cobia, but after the storm, all bets are off. Cobia catches were good, with some fish going to well over 60 and 70-pounds this week. Many of the fish are responding well to sight caster's offerings of both live bait and lures. Boats chumming on the shoals are also faring well, but sharks and rays are still a nuisance. Areas off Hampton such as Blue Fish Rock are productive, while the Inner Middle grounds and Latimer Shoal areas are also providing good results with some larger fish caught on live croakers, eels, and cut bait.

Although red drum are no longer in the lime light, big reds continue to school around the Eastern side of the Bay, where a few bulls are taking bait intended for cobia. Black drum continue to hit around the artificial islands of the CBBT, where anglers are hooking some fish while casting.

The Spanish mackerel scene is on the rise. Folks trolling the mouth of the Bay, the CBBT, and the oceanfront shorelines are finding some limits of mackerel ranging up to around 22-inches. Plenty of small Taylor bluefish are also in the mix. The largest Spanish were biting off Cape Henry near the pound nets in 18 to 30-feet of water before the hurricane blew through.

Interest in spadefish is low, but plenty of fish are still circling structure most everywhere. The Chesapeake Light Tower and the 3rd and 4th islands of the CBBT are favorite locations, with most spades averaging around 2 to 4-pounds. The CBBT structure is also providing some decent catches of sheepshead lately, where fiddlers are working best, especially near the 1st, 3rd and 4th islands. Lots of aggressive triggerfish are also hitting in the same areas.

Puppy drum continue to bite in the lower Bay inlets, along with some speckled trout. Sea mullet are hitting in the southern small boat channel near the Bay Bridge-Tunnel, and within Magothy Bay inlet. Croaker and spot are scattered all over the lower Bay, with some hardheads weighing in at over a pound. The popular croaker holes in Oyster are also drawing a crowd, content to fill coolers with medium sized fish lately. Tarpon hunters are also making their way to the backwaters of Oyster hoping for a rare hook-up with a silver king.

Amberjack are still available at the southern towers and at some of the offshore wrecks such as the Triangles, Ricks and Hanks. Deep droppers are still enjoying good catches of big blueline tilefish, scattered golden tiles, wreckfish, and blackbellied rosefish. Some nice seabass are still available on some wrecks and structures to around 30-miles out.

Virginia offshore patterns will regroup after the storm, but the action was not off the charts before then, anyway. The tuna bite was still lagging this week, with some stray yellowfin, scattered big eyes, and a few big bluefin tuna lurking about. One bluefin tuna weighed in at the dock at over 600-pounds this week. Some bailer and gaffer mahi are around, along with mako sharks, and an occasional shot at a billfish.

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

## Delaware Action

By Eric Burnley Sr.\*

**DELAWARE BAY** The number of croaker caught last week was down a bit from previous weeks, but there are still more than enough to keep most anglers happy. The larger fish seem to be in the tidal creeks and rivers where croaker to 15 inches were reported. Kings, trout and blues have been taken along with the croaker. Just about any bait along with Gulp! and FishBites will attract a croaker. In the past, some of my largest croaker were caught on fresh, cut bait.

Flounder fishing has improved on the reef sites. Boats working from the north to the south have reported scattered flounder directly on top of hard structure. The Miah Maull Shoal and the Flounder Alley have also seen some flatfish action. A live minnow and Gulp! combination or a strip bait on a bucktail are two of the better flounder baits.

The Broadkill River and Lewes and Rehoboth Canal have produced flounder. The numbers have declined as the water in these areas warm.

A few trout remain at Roosevelt Inlet, the Ferry Wall and the rock jetties at Broadkill Beach. The number of fish has declined, but the size of those taken remains between four to six pounds. A bucktail with a rubber worm or Gulp! remains a top bait. Peeler crab will not only attract trout, but just about every other fish that swims.

Rockfish remain in the upper bay near the power plant. Keepers were in the 28 to 30-inch class, but now we are in the summer season where legal fish must be between 20 and 26 inches. This should open up an entirely new fishery as all those short fish

will be keepers. In the upper bay, peeler crab has been the top rockfish bait.

Look for slot rockfish in all the tidal rivers and creeks from the Brandywine to the Broadkill. Work the shoreline early in the day when these rock patrol the area looking for food. Any number of lures and baits should produce with Gulp!, live minnows or peeler crab at the top of the list.

The pier at Cape Henlopen State Park has seen good numbers of croaker and spot on bloodworms. Flounder have been caught on live minnows or Speck Rigs baited with strips of fish or Gulp!. The occasional bluefish has been caught on bloodworms, squid or cut bait.

Rockfish were caught after dark at the Outer Wall with live eels the best bait. With the slot season on now it might be a good idea to scale down the size of the bait to attract a smaller class of rock.

**INSHORE OCEAN** The Old Grounds and the inshore reef sites are seeing more flounder action. The cooler water in the ocean is attracting flounder out of the warmer water in the rivers and bays. Good conditions are required for successful drifting in this deep water. Light winds and a weak current produce the best action. Live minnows or spot along with strips of squid or fish on a Delaware Bay Green Machine or bucktail will attract the flatfish. The occasional sea bass and croaker have been taken along with the flounder.

Larger and more plentiful sea bass are on wrecks in 20 fathoms or more. Big ling have been mixed with the sea bass.

We have seen reports of eight- to 12-pound bluefish at Massey's Canyon with small blues and bonito on the wrecks at Fenwick Island.

**OFFSHORE OCEAN** Tuna fishing fell off this week for reasons known only to the tuna. We are expecting a fair-sized storm later in the week and this could turn on all of the offshore fishing action.

As this is written I had a report of a new Maryland state record wahoo caught out of Ocean City. The big fish tipped the scales at 131 pounds, 20 pounds more than the previous state record. The *Odinspear* was the boat and the wahoo took a ballyhoo in 60 fathoms.

I think we will begin to see more marlin and fewer tuna on the troll with plenty of dolphin on anything that floats. Tuna fishing will be best on the chunk at sunrise.

**INDIAN RIVER INLET** With rough weather forecast for the holiday the inlet will be even more crowded than normal for a weekend since boats may not want to venture

outside. If you must fish here please be careful.

Flounder are still being caught from the rocks on minnows and bucktails. Boaters are finding them on the same baits in the VFW Slough, Burton's Island Channel and in Massey's Ditch. It is a numbers game; if you can find some fish there is good chance a few keepers will be in the mix. Fishing before sunrise is the best way to avoid the crowds.

Rockfish have been caught from the rocks on bucktails, plugs and live eels. Most of the larger fish have been caught after dark. Live spot worked near the sunken pilings from the old bridge have also produced keeper rockfish.

Drifting sand fleas during the day can be effective on sheepshead and small rockfish. At night the same bait may produce keeper rockfish.

Blues and hickory shad occasionally pass through the inlet on incoming water. Small spoons, Speck Rigs and shad darts will attract their attention.

**SURF FISHING** I have hit the sand at Herring Point twice in the past week and both times ended up feeding the local crab population. One trip I did see a very large ray caught much to the delight of every kid on the beach.

Croaker and kings have been taken by better anglers than me. On Sunday there was a fair run of kings on the southern beaches and on Tuesday a few croaker were caught at Herring Point. Bloodworms and FishBites are doing most of the damage.

## Tips and Tackle

### Using Soft Plastic Baits

**From trout to tuna, plastic baits offer unmatched versatility.**

By [Bob Stearns](#)

Soft-plastic lures, in all their sizes, shapes, colors and styles, can be almost as effective as natural baits. Built-in scent and a variety of configurations - shrimp and fish imitations, eels and shad-style bodies with different tail shapes for lifelike action - can be deadly over a wide range of water types and fishing situations. Tuna on the continental shelf, stripers on the jetties, snook and tarpon in the inlets, and redfish and trout on the flats - there is scarcely a situation in which soft plastics can't do the job.

### Think Skinny

Soft plastics are especially effective for flats fishing, sight-casting and surf fishing because they land quietly. They can also be

used right on the surface when rigged weightless. A plastic shrimp is ideal for this when the internal weight is removed and the hook positioned so that it sticks out at the bottom, keeping the body upright. So is a 4- to 8-inch slender plastic body rigged weedless on a large-gap hook, a deadly rig for fishing shorelines and structure.

Many anglers sight-fishing on grassy flats remove the internal hook from a plastic shrimp and rig it without the tail fin to swim backward on a larger hook. The point lies right along the back so the lure is almost completely weedless, and it casts much easier and more accurately when rigged this way.

One or two plastic beads in front of the hook eye can increase the strike potential of almost all soft-plastic rigs. Everyone has their own color favorites; mine include orange, red, chartreuse and black, and I prefer 6 to 8 mm beads. A bead inside the loop formed by the leader when you're tying it to the eye of the hook prevents shrimp bodies and other soft plastics from sliding up the leader after hookup and becoming a target for other fish.

### Go Deep

Over the years, I have successfully fished as deep as 150 feet with soft plastics. Getting down to where the fish are is a matter of weight and overall shape, especially when you're trying to reach a deep reef or wreck. If there is current or the boat is drifting with the wind, it takes more weight to get down quickly. The most effective designs for this are streamlined: Usually the choice for deep work is an arrow-shaped jig-type head with a slender cylindrical body up to 14 inches long, such as the RonZ 4x series. Some baits have a twisted tail to provide swimming action, which often gets more strikes, especially in colder water.

The basic technique is simple. Drop the lure over the side or cast it a short distance, and let it sink with the bail open or in free-spool. As soon as it reaches the desired depth, immediately start retrieving it with lots of rod-tip action, shifting from short, quick upward sweeps to longer, somewhat slower lifts. Vary the retrieve rate until you find the right combination. If you are not getting as deep as you need as fast as you feel you should, increase the weight of the head.

On a calm day with no current, you might get to over 100 feet with a 2-ounce lead head. Other times you may need 3 ounces or more. For maximum weight, add egg sinkers to the leader above the jig head.

I have caught dorado and tuna on the surface by always having a second rod rigged with a slow-sinking softy suitable for

quick casting. And very often, just drifting and slowly jiggling a soft plastic with little or no weight behind the boat is exactly what's needed for fish cruising or feeding at mid-depth levels, especially when you're chumming or chunking.

Keep in mind that offshore fish range from big to extremely big and are therefore strong, so use heavy-wire hooks like those offered by Shankas and Hogy.

### Find 'em at Home

Depths from five to 25 feet require less weight for a lure to reach bottom. This is an environment where shrimp and swimming baitfish imitations, like the D.O.A. B.F.L. (which looks like a mullet), are especially effective. And of course, a jig head with a soft body attached is always effective.

One of my favorite inshore rigs uses a shank-weighted large-gap hook to make the plastic sink and swim more naturally in a horizontal position. This system works best for depths down to 20 or more feet if the current is not too swift. The lure can also be made to swim right at the surface. In many situations, a bait that sinks slowly can be fished with a slower retrieve that gets more strikes.

The venerable soft-plastic shrimp has undergone continual improvement over the years. Since shrimp come in endless colors and sizes, science has yet to identify a game fish that won't eat them. Most shrimp lures are prerigged, with the hook sticking out the back. A weight in the belly provides balance for a slow retrieve or natural drift with an occasional twitch along the bottom or over the top of grass beds. For deeper water it is sometimes necessary to add weight to the leader in front of the hook, creating a so-called Carolina rig. It is also possible to peg the sinker a foot or two up the leader, which allows the weightless shrimp to swim slightly above the bottom in a natural manner.

## DNR in the News

### Judge Permanently Revokes Commercial Fishing License of Repeat Offender

A Talbot County Circuit judge has upheld a lifetime fishing ban on a former waterman with a record of multiple poaching convictions.

"The court's decision affirms the wisdom of the General Assembly, which recognized the significance of crimes against the public trust and the severity of their impact on our natural world," said DNR Secretary Joe Gill. "Stealing from our public fishery is an

offense against all of us, and especially the State's honest, hardworking watermen."

Joseph Bruce Janda Jr., 28, of Wittman, had his commercial license permanently revoked a year ago by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Over a decade, Janda has been charged more than 60 times and been found guilty on numerous occasions for poaching oysters, illegal striped bass fishing and harvesting undersized crabs. In addition, he has been convicted of fishing without a license and fishing on a suspended license.

In 2011, Janda was cited for two crabbing violations within a two-year period worth 35 points on his licenses, which triggered a revocation hearing by an administrative law judge.

In writing last Friday, Judge J. Owen Wise rejected Janda's appeal, calling him a "chronic offender" who had accumulated 415 days of suspensions.

"A license is a privilege and therefore something which can be taken away, or not granted at all (as with hunting and driver's licenses) so petitioner does not have a lifelong right to take resources from bays, rivers and creeks," Wise ruled. "The law does not say that a person has to violate all laws pertaining to each marine resource before his/her license can be suspended or revoked."

In addition to revoking Janda's license, Wise also ruled he is permanently banned from being on any boat harvesting oysters and cannot be involved in any activity associated with oyster harvesting. Further, Janda is barred from engaging in commercial fishing activities, even ones supervised by a license holder.

Tougher penalties, authorized by the General Assembly, have created a "one and done" revocation process for the most egregious offenders and increased the penalty for engaging in commercial fishing with a suspended license, a revoked license or without a license, by establishing a fine of up to \$25,000 and imprisonment for up to one year.

Enhanced enforcement is a major component of Governor O'Malley's Oyster Restoration and Aquaculture Development Plan. The oyster recovery blueprint has paved the way for aerial surveillance of oyster beds by NRP officers aboard Maryland State Police helicopters, the Maritime Law Enforcement Information Network of radar units and cameras, and specific natural resources dockets in 18 of 24 district courts.

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## FREDERICK MSSA CHAPTER - 2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

www.mssafrederick.com

<b>JANUARY</b>	<b>11</b>	- <b>Dinner Dance</b> - Frederick Moose Club
	<b>17</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>18</b>	- <b>Frederick Chapter Fishing Expo – Frederick Fair Grounds</b>
	25-26	- Kent Island Chapter Flea Market
	23-26	- Baltimore Boat Show – Baltimore Convention Center
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	1-3	- MSSA Convention, Annapolis, MD
	1	- Tri State Marine Flea Market – Free in Deale MD
	<b>12</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting -</b>
	<b>19</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	15-16	- Pasadena Flea Market – Earleigh Heights Fire Co, Pasadena, MD
	22	- Dorchester County Flea Market – American Legion Post 91 – Cambridge, MD
22	- Saltwater Fishing Expo Annapolis Elks #622 – Edgewater MD	
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>5</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>12</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	15-16	- Essex/Middle River Flea Market
	22-23	- Southern MD Fishing Fair – Solomons Fire Hall
<b>APRIL</b>	<b>2</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>5</b>	- <b>Frederick Shakedown Cruise/Brunch</b> – Sandy Point
	<b>9</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	19	- Opening Day - Striped Bass Season
<b>MAY</b>	2-4	- 30th Annual MSSA Spring Tournament – Solomons
	<b>7</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>14</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>15-18</b>	- <b>Chapter Flounder Tournament</b> – Chincoteague
<b>JUNE</b>	<b>4</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>11</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	20-22	- 21th Annual MSSA Tunament – Ocean City & Wachapreague
<b>JULY</b>	<b>2</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>9</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>6</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>13</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	23	- 4rd Annual MSSA Beach N Boat Flounder Tournament – Ocean City
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>3</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>10</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>13</b>	- <b>Chapter Crab Feast and Picnic</b>
<b>OCTOBER</b>	<b>1</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	4-11	- <b>Chapter North Carolina King Mackerel Tournament</b>
	<b>15</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>5</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>12</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	21-23	- 19 <sup>th</sup> Annual MSSA Fall Tournament
<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>3</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>10</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>