

# 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

I can't believe it is already August. The temps are still high, and the area has had some of the best fishing we have seen in years. There is a high quality of Striped Bass in the Northern Bay this year, with some large fish still being caught. Cobia, Spanish Mackerel, large Bluefish, and school Stripers and Speckled Trout are in abundance in the lower bay area. And the numbers are starting to get hot offshore from the Delaware Inlet to Ocean City to Chincoteague. Overall, it has been a good year for the recreational fisherman.

The Chapter has some events coming up, which include the Cobia tournament, the Crab Feast, and then the King Mackerel trip in October. This trip is a huge hit, and just a great time to be spent with fellow club members. Hopefully, the weather cooperates this year. These events are just a few of the reasons the MSSA Frederick Chapter is the best and most active Chapter in the entire MSSA.

On a little more serious note, I want to make sure everyone is aware, one of our members, and just about the nicest guy you could ever meet, Al Geisler, has been stricken with the Vibrio, or as it is better known, the "flesh eating disease". Al has endured multiple surgeries, and has several more to go, but we are hoping the worst is behind him. We will have a lot more information about Vibrio at the Chapter meeting August 9<sup>th</sup>, as our speaker Capt. Charlie Schneider has himself been infected with this bacteria, and endured multiple surgeries and recovery himself. I urge you to come and learn as much as you can about Vibrio, as it may be your family who needs help next. Know what to do...

Tight Lines,  
Jim

## Next Meeting

**Date: August 9, 2017**

Food Service begins at 6:15 PM

Meeting at 7:00 PM

**Speaker:** Capt. Charlie Schneider from Big Will Charters II will be our guest speaker. Capt. Charlie will be speaking about Vibrio, better known as "The flesh eating disease".

**Vendor:** Bust Em Baits will be our vendor this month. They will have an assortment of their quality baits.

### **Dinner Menu:**

Fried Chicken  
Mac n Cheese  
French Fries  
Salad  
Dessert

**Attendance at June Meeting: 58**

### **Raffle Winners:**

Tool Kit- Mike Luzier  
Spot Rigs- Porter King  
Fighting Belt- Ed Susa  
Pliers- Jim Bremer  
Glasses/Shirt- Brian Buckman  
Tuna Bar- Jim Lorditch  
Jigs- Brian Conway  
Jones Baits- Eddie Schulte

### **50/50 Raffle:**

Emory Connor- \$58

### **Directions To Meeting at the Frederick**

**Moose Lodge:** – [Map](#)  
From Frederick, take **I-70** east to **exit 56** (Rt. 144W). Turn slight right onto MD-144. Go 0.8 miles to 828 E. Patrick St. on the left

## Important New Chapter Policy

As many of you know, the MSSA Frederick Chapter is host to a number of events and tournaments. The Chapter does not use any of these events as fundraisers. As a matter of fact, the exact opposite is true. During our tournament series, the Chapter does not keep a single cent of the registration fees. And while the Crab Feast and the Dinner Dance are paid events, the entry fees do not cover the costs of these events. Instead, the MSSA Frederick Chapter adds significant funds to each of these events, to enhance their value to our members.

The extra funds for these events come from our fundraisers. Consider these numbers... Our Chapter has 225 registered members, of which there are over 100 active members at any time. During our most recent fundraiser, we requested every member sell 5 tickets. We should have easily sold out of tickets. But that did not happen. And after the final tally was reached, the tickets that WERE sold were sold by a total of 33 members. That means less than 1/3 of all active members participated in supporting the Chapter.

So the Board has adopted a new policy. In November, we will begin the next Fundraiser for the Chapter. It will again be a Raffle. The raffle fundraiser will end in February, and at that time all ticket sales will be tallied. Here is the important part. In order to register as Captain for any of the Chapter tournaments, or attend either the Dinner Dance, or Crab Feast, you MUST sell/buy 5 raffle tickets OR donate \$100 to the Chapter in addition to the regular entry fees.

Every member of the MSSA Frederick Chapter is welcome to attend every regular Chapter meeting, and receive

the benefit of our Guest Speakers, and Vendor's specials. But to participate in the events that the Chapter adds funds, we need to make sure everyone is doing their part.

## Fishing Reports

### Maryland DNR Fishing Report

#### **Maryland Weekly Fishing Report Overview**

July 26, 2017

As most of us know it was pretty darned hot last week and those hot temperatures are driving up water temperatures and having a profound effect on fish and fishing. Unfortunately those hot temperatures can also result in violent storm activity when a cool front comes through as it did Sunday. I happened to be able to witness the tornado devastation on Kent Island Monday morning and my heart goes out to those affected. I also noticed large patches of discolored water from runoff which does not help the fishing situation in the bay. This runoff may also impact your favorite impoundment, stream or river. Sound advice is to keep close watch on summer storm activity out on the water and wear those lifejackets, they don't do any good stashed in a boat locker.

At the very top of the bay in the region of the lower Susquehanna River there continues to be early morning action in the Conowingo Dam pool for striped bass. Casting heavy swimshads has been popular but topwater lures have proven successful also. There are also some striped bass being caught in the boulder strewn areas of the river just below the dam pool. At the Susquehanna Flats area there is a topwater bite that is providing just enough action to have a few locals coming back for more. They report that smallmouth bass and largemouth bass are also part of the mix.

As we approach middle of summer, Maryland's main bay surface and upper water column temperatures are in the low 80s (F) with numerous rivers showing higher water temperatures. Remember that larger striped bass prefer cooler water temperatures and will avoid temperature above 84 degrees F. Fortunately, there are lots of Maryland waters that have adequate oxygen from surface to bottom so the focus is on deeper waters that will provide best combination of cool water and adequate oxygen. Here are some tips for locating striped bass and an outlook on bay conditions over the next few days.

- Anglers may want to explore the Chesapeake Bay bridge area up to Rock Hall at depths down to about 30 feet. This area has the best combination of coolest water with adequate oxygen.
- The best fishing areas could be further refined by intersecting these prime areas with underwater points, drop-offs, large schools of baitfish and moving water.
- If present, avoid fishing in any large algal blooms.
- Some areas of poor water clarity could occur as a result of localized rainfall.
- Take advantage of the new moon July 23, 2017, for above average tidal currents and nighttime low light conditions

through Thursday.

- Aside from some forecast precipitation Thursday and Friday, bay conditions should be relatively stable for the upcoming week.

For more detailed and up-to-date fishing conditions in your area of the bay, be sure to check out Eyes on the Bay's [Click Before You Cast](#). Since this is a new feature for Chesapeake Bay anglers, drop us a line with comments or suggestions. Fishing for striped bass in the upper bay region continues to be good this week at several locations where chumming or live lining spot is taking place. Swan Point, the Love Point area (which includes the Triple Buoys), the Mud Flats and finally Podickory Point. Most are chumming or chunking with continued success along the channel edges at these locations but live lining spot is becoming increasingly popular for those making the trip to the upper bay locations from middle bay region ports. Generally the same story unfolds this week; the larger striped bass are holding close to the bottom as long as there is oxygen down there and the smaller two and 3-year-old striped bass are higher in the water column. As surface water temperatures climb into the mid 80s the morning bite for larger fish is usually better. The new "Click Before You Cast" link from the Eyes on the Bay Program will help anglers understand where deeper and cooler waters have enough oxygen to hold the larger striped bass.

There continues to be some trolling action along the steeper channel edges of the shipping channel on the western side of the bay from Chesapeake Beach south. Inline weights or planers are needed to get lures down close to the bottom where fish are holding. Bucktails dressed with sassy shads or twistertails are a good bet as are surge tube lures. Trolling is an option and a mix of red surge tube lures, bucktails dressed with sassy shads or twistertails and small spoons are common lures being used.

All are being pulled behind inline weights or in the case of small spoons and medium-sized bucktails, planers can be used. Umbrella rigs are another option and often need heavy inline weights to get down to the fish. Jigging can be an option if suspended fish can be located along channel edges or under smaller breaking fish. In the middle bay region breaking fish are being encountered at times and there has been some success with jigging under the surface action or trolling in the vicinity. As is usual the surface fish are two and 3-year-old striped bass and small bluefish are becoming more common in the mix this week. Metal jigs and large soft plastics have been popular for those jigging and small spoons, red surge tube lures and bucktails have been good trolling lures. Inline weights and planers are in order to help get trolling lures down to where the larger striped bass are holding. Now that there are plenty of spot in the middle bay region on shoals and bars in the tidal rivers and bay edges live lining spot is a wonderful option. Slowly cruising along channel edges until suspended fish can be spotted and then live lining spot is a great option this week. Traditional locations like the Diamonds, the Hill, Thomas Point and Hackett's are some of the first places to be checked.

The shallow water striped bass fishery has been steadily deteriorating as water temperatures in the shallows soar, it is just too warm for the striped bass over 20". At times one can be lucky enough to encounter a few fish in the earliest hours of the morning before sun rise but cooler water temperatures are needed before this fishery revives itself. Even white perch are finding the shallows a bit toasty and the larger perch tend to be holding deeper now. Bottom fishing for a mix of white perch, spot and a few croakers has been a fun option in the middle bay region this week. Hard bottom is one of first places to check and bloodworms are the bait of choice for spot, peeler crab or shrimp can also be a good option for white perch and croaker. If fishing from docks or other shoreline options, grass shrimp are a good bait as are small minnows. In the lower bay region there is a wonderful mix of fishing options this week. Spanish mackerel are starting to

be more common this week and they are mixing it up with bluefish and striped bass chasing bay anchovies. Trolling a mix of small spoons, red surge tubes (hoses) and bucktails have been what most are using in their trolling spreads. When targeting Spanish mackerel, small spoons behind inline weights or planers and kicking up the speed a bit goes a long way to success. Bluefish will also chase down those spoons and go for red surge tube lures (hoses).

Cobia are steadily becoming more common in the lower bay region around the Middle Grounds and the Target Ship areas. Smaller sized ones are showing up in chum slicks and the larger ones are being found often holding near buoys. Cobia will take cut bait in chum slicks and those targeting buoys are using live eels, live spot or large skirted soft plastic jigs.

Chumming for a mix of striped bass, bluefish and prized cobia has been very popular this week. The Buoy 72 area, the Middle Grounds, the lower Potomac, the Rock Piles and Point No Point Reef have been good places to look for striped bass to set up on. Bluefish and small striped bass tend to dominate chum slicks and small inshore sharks such as black tips are also being caught.

Jigging can be an option for striped bass when fish can be found suspended along channel edges this week. Some of the best striped bass action lately has been in the Potomac River above the Route 301 Bridge.

There continues to be good fishing for speckled trout on the eastern side of the bay along sedge marsh edges and small creeks running out of the marshes. Drifting peeler crab baits is always fun since such a wide variety of fish will take them. Speckled trout are of course the target but bluefish, striped bass, red drum, large white perch and even flounder have a hard time passing up a yummy bait like that. Unfortunately cow-nosed rays love the smell of crab also and will give a light tackle angler a run for his money.

Fishing for large spot has been extremely good in the lower bay region this week. The lower Patuxent River near the Hawks Nest and Hellen's Bar area have been excellent places to fish with bloodworms on a bottom rig. White perch, kingfish and a few croaker are helping round out the mix. The

lower Potomac around Ragged Point and the mouth of St. Mary's River have been good places to fish. On the eastern side of the bay the Sands and Great Rock shoals are good places to fish and the spot should be moving into the Hooper's Island area this week.

It is certainly no secret that hot summer weather is upon us and freshwater fish like us are looking for some relief from sweltering temperatures. In the western region of the state, fish at Deep Creek Lake are going as deep as possible as long as there is sufficient oxygen down there to breath. Cold water fish such as northern pike, walleye, yellow perch and trout are down deep and tend to stay down there for the duration. Smallmouth bass are a little more tolerant and will come into shallower areas to feed at night and can at times be found lazing under floating docks in the morning hours. Largemouth bass follow the same pattern but tend to stay in transition areas near structure or under floating docks and fallen tree tops to get away from the sun. Flipping whacky rigged soft plastics under structure providing shade or deeper sunken wood or rocks is a great option. Trout in the western region will be also looking for shade from the sun and cool flowing water. Deep pools that are shaded by overhanging trees is a great place to start. Usually early mornings and late evenings are the best times to fish since most trout are actively feeding at night. Smallmouth bass in the upper Potomac tend to hold to the same pattern as warmer water temperatures prevail. Deep water current breaks, submerged ledges in deeper waters and large boulders are good places to target with tubes, topwater lures and crankbaits. Largemouth bass fishing is solidly in a typical summer pattern of behavior. The bass are feeding at night in the shallower areas of lakes, ponds and tidal rivers and retreating to cool shade during the hotter day time hours. That shade can come in the form of overhead cover such as docks, fallen treetops or thick floating grass. Usually when they are holding in the shade they will subtly pick up baits such as whacky rigged stick worms that are enticingly dropped in front of them. Late in the evening or early morning hours will find them shallow and topwater lures are the ticket to some

fun. Chatterbaits, buzzbaits, frogs and poppers are all good choices and watch out for northern snakeheads to get in on the action also.

At our coastal areas around Ocean City, surf fishing for a summer mix of kingfish, croaker, flounder and small bluefish has been good. The early morning and late evening hours tend to offer the best opportunities and an incoming tide helps up the odds. Bloodworms, sand fleas or small cut baits from spot are good choices for the kingfish. Squid will work well for flounder and croaker. Cut bait or finger mullet are the best options for bluefish.

In and around the inlet and Route 50 Bridge fishing for sheepshead has been good when fishing tight to structure. Sand fleas tend to be the best option, but where opportunity presents itself, chumming with barnacles and slipping some on a hook can really put you on to some nice fishing. It takes some prep but a flat shovel is used to scrape them off pilings at low tide into a bucket, then you set up where you believe sheepshead may be holding. Flounder are being caught in the inlet during the day on squid and some larger flounder are coming to net for those drifting live spot. At night bluefish and striped bass are being caught on cut bait, live spot or by casting swimshads and bucktails. Flounder are holding in some of the back bay channels but finding legal sized flounder has been tough lately. Sinepuxent Bay and the area near the airport has been reported to be offering some of the better fishing lately. Outside the inlet, flounder are being found on some of the nearshore shoal areas and out at the wreck and reef sites. Larger flounder help round out a day's catch near the wreck and reef sites for those fishing for sea bass. Those that specifically target flounder at these sites often do well. The 20 Fathom lumps along the 30 Fathom line have been great places to chunk for a nice grade of yellowfin tuna this week. Massey's has also been providing good chunking opportunities, chicken dolphin can be part of the mix. There has also been some good trolling action in this area for yellowfin tuna, gaffer dolphin, white marlin and wahoo. Out at the offshore canyons, there is a mix of yellowfin tuna, wahoo, dolphin

and blue and white marlin being caught. There is also some excellent deep drop fishing on the inside edges of the canyon shelves for a mix of large sea bass and two species of tilefish.

## **Virginia Beach Action**

Weekly Sportfishing Rundown  
21 July 2017

The hottest days of the year are making outdoor activities a challenge lately, but fishing can be good if you can bear the heat. And with a decent forecast for the weekend, plenty of anglers will hit the water.

Cobia continue to provide very good action for sight-casters most everywhere in the Bay, with more large fish showing up this week. Chummers are still scoring with keeper-sized fish, but the trash fish and sharks are relentless.

The red drum action is hot right now as pods of big drum school around the mouth of the Bay and off the Virginia Beach ocean front. Casters are thrilled with easy catches of fat fish, making great props for summer photo-ops. Boats targeting sharks are having good luck with a variety of toothy species ranging to around 4-feet or more, especially off the oceanfront area.

The flounder action in the Bay is still very productive, with some respectable flatfish to show. Jigging and live bait are most effective, with both techniques working around all four islands of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, with the average flattie averaging around 20 to 22-inches. Anglers drifting with strip baits and minnows are also lucking into good numbers of fish near the 4th island, the Hampton Bar, and the Thimble Shoal Channel. Both Lynnhaven and Rudee Inlets are also giving up a few keepers lately. Good action is also coming from nearshore and inshore wrecks. Jumbo seabass will also take offerings on the same wrecks.

Big Spanish mackerel continue to dominate the trolling scene along the ocean front, with some citation-sized fish boated lately. Some catches of

Spanish are also occurring within Bay waters, especially around the islands of the CBBT. King mackerel are here, but the bite has not taken off as of yet. But the bait is here, just not the clean water.

Sheepshead are still biting well along the CBBT structure, with more fish beginning to move to the tubes of the artificial islands. Triggerfish are still biting in many of these same areas. Spadefish are still available at the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Tower Reef, the CBBT, and several inshore wrecks. The 4th island of the CBBT was particularly productive this week with some respectable fish using clams as bait.

Bottom bouncers are gathering in Oyster to get in on the big yearly croaker ritual, as the size of the hardheads increase this week. In lower Bay waters, croaker are still everywhere, and size varies with the location. The area off Kiptopeke State Park is still a favorite location, while some nicer croaker are also coming from the Inlets lately. Sea mullet are also still lurking off Kiptopeke and the concrete ships.

Tarpon are active on the Eastern Shore, with some reported hook-ups keeping tarpon hunters happy in the back waters of Oyster as long as they can endure the blazing heat and biting flies.

Amberjack are still an available at many offshore wrecks and the Southern Towers. Deep dropping is going well, with good hauls of the usual blue-line tilefish, golden tilefish and an occasional grouper and side-catch of nice seabass. The newest state record Golden Tilefish was recently approved at a respectable 58-pounds.

Offshore, the billfish are beginning to show, with a few blue and white marlin responding to live bait this week. Further south, crews are also finding a few sailfish. Catches of yellowfin tuna and big eye tuna are scattered, but some decent yellowfin action is happening near the fingers now. But the bluefin tuna bite at the fingers has cooled. Some big dolphin are showing here and there, along with some wahoo.

<http://www.drjball.com>

## Delaware Fishing Report

**Updated: July 27, 2017**

**DELAWARE BAY** The bay reef sites continue to provide flounder, triggerfish, spadefish and sea bass. Keeper sea bass are rare in the bay and citation sea bass are hardly heard of, but on Wednesday, John Kyle from Pittsburgh landed a 3.82-pound sea bass while fishing on the Pirate King out of Lewes. His party also had triggerfish and one flounder.

While the big sea bass was unusual for Delaware Bay, the rest of the catch is typical for this summer. Limits of anything are rare, but if you keep working the reef site rubble you should be able to put a catch together.

Anglers toggling off of the Outer and Inner walls and the Ice Breakers have caught triggerfish and sheephead on sand fleas and squid. To date I have not heard of a keeper tog from these locations.

The fishing pier at Cape Henlopen State Park has seen a very few keeper flounder caught on jigs worked around the pilings. Most folks bait the jigs with squid, live minnows or Gulp!. Over the past few days some very small croaker have arrived at the pier. Most fail to meet the minimum size of eight inches. Keeper spot have also been caught from the same area. Bloodworms are the top bait for both croaker and spot.

Rockfish that fall in the slot of 20 to 25 inches remain elusive. There seem to be plenty of smaller fish, but not very many keepers. These fish are spread out from New Castle to Lewes along the shoreline and in the tidal creeks and rivers.

White perch and catfish continue to take bloodworms or cut bunker from piers at the C&D Canal, Woodland Beach and Port Mahon. They are also

available at Augustine Beach and the tidal creeks and rivers.

- **ADVISORY: Summer Flounder Regulations:** As of April 1, the minimum size for summer flounder in Delaware is 17 inches. The bag limit remains at four fish per day and the season runs for 365 days.

**INSHORE OCEAN** Flounder keep showing up then disappearing from the Old Grounds. One day fishing will be fair then nothing caught the next day. Even on the good days limits are rare. Charter boats that last year were catching limits every trip have moved on to other species this year. The occasional keeper sea bass has been caught along with the flounder. The inshore reef sites tell the same story. A few flounder now and then plus some triggerfish.

The tuna bite slowed at the Lumps with a few boats doing well while others get skunked. Chunking remains the most productive technique, but tuna and dolphin are still taken on the troll. The Fenwick Island wrecks still give up bluefish to trolled spoons. Some triggerfish have been caught there as well.

**OFFSHORE OCEAN** The offshore troll has been slow. A few tuna and billfish, but not much considering the expense of running out 50 or 60 miles. Some charter and private boats are deep dropping with good success on tilefish and black sea bass.

**INDIAN RIVER INLET** I hear of one or two keeper flounder caught on good days and nothing caught on bad days. This is at least three years of very poor flounder fishing from the Inlet and Back Bays. Could the fishery managers be right? Could the summer flounder population be severely diminished?

Sheepshead and triggerfish are caught from the inlet jetty on sand fleas. At night the same bait drifted in the rocks may provide a keeper rockfish.

**SURF FISHING** I fished the beach at Herring Point on Wednesday. Arrived at the top of the tide and fed bloodworms to unknown critters until 1 p.m. Water was rough but clean.

**FRESHWATER** No change here. The lower Brandywine River is seeing some musky and bass on live bait and

plugs. White perch are also available on bloodworms.

The ponds give up largemouth bass on Senkos, Scum Frogs and live minnows. This summer heat has the fish seeking shade under lily pads and blowdowns.

The upper reaches of the tidal rivers and creeks hold bass and crappie. An early or late day falling tide is the most productive time to fish with crankbaits and jigs.

**WEEKEND OUTLOOK** According to the latest weather reports, the weekend outlook is dismal. A nor'easter is supposed to hit the coast on Friday and stick around until Monday. Good weekend to get some honey dos done or spruce up your tackle.

There are some old salts that claim a nor'easter will stir up the water and improve the fishing. Let's hope they are right!

By Eric Burnley Sr.\*

## DNR in the News

### **Online Fishing Tool Helps Anglers Find the Fish**

July 26, 2017

#### *Using Science to Increase Fishing Success*

"Where are the fish?" The Maryland Department of Natural Resources is helping anglers answer this age-old question with a new online tool, "Click Before You Cast."

The tool provides a simple-to-follow, eight-step process to help anglers identify the best places to fish based on a number of scientific data points, be it clarity, habitat, oxygen levels, salinity or water quality. Click Before You Cast seeks to enhance the fishing experience and help anglers find and catch the species they are seeking.

Maryland and its partner agencies collect, analyze and post a variety of environmental monitoring data to aid in the protection and restoration of critical natural resources, including Maryland's treasured waterways like the Chesapeake Bay. This data can also be used by anglers and fishermen as they prepare for their fishing trip.

"When this goldmine of data and monitoring information is combined and distilled, it can provide anglers with a powerful new tool to avoid unproductive waters, save fuel, and increase the chances of fishing success," said Tom Parham of the department's Resource Assessment Service. "This is a great example of using science to serve multiple partners and purposes while providing valuable customer service for Maryland residents and visitors."

## **Tips and Tricks from Fishtalk Magazine!**

### **Crabbing: 10 Trot-Lining Tips**

Crabbing is a great way to spend time on the water, and trot-lining is a very effective and fairly easy way to fill the bushel basket. Crabbing in my family started when I was very young, when I would go out with my dad and have a fun morning—and then an even better afternoon as we got to feast on the succulent crustaceans. Then I started my own business crabbing commercially for the past two summers. Here are 10 things I learned while trot-lining on the bay.

1. Don't be afraid to pick up and move your line. Crabs are very depth- and bottom-oriented. If you're not in the right area, you simply won't catch crabs. Although moving the line may seem like a waste of time when you're out on the water, if you're only catching a crab or two that are keepers every run, it's worth it to try a different depth. The type of bottom you're over also plays a big role. If you notice that your trot line is flinging mud off your baits and you're not catching crabs, go try a spot where you know there's a shell bottom.
2. Use a heavy enough anchor. I highly recommend using mushroom anchors. Mushrooms are very easy to handle, can be dragged if necessary, and work on all bottoms. When buying your mushroom anchor, it's crucial to choose an anchor heavy enough to stick on the bottom when you pick up the line to start running it. If your anchor is too light, you'll drag it as the boat moves forward. This process will create lots of

slack in your line, and will ruin that run—while also creating a problem (all that slack) that you need to fix. An anchor anywhere from seven to 10 pounds should do the trick. Although heavier anchors are harder to move around the boat, it is more important that you can run your trotline effectively.

3. Tighten or tie baits as tightly as possible to your line and snoods. Crabs are very tricky carnivorous devils. Whatever bait you are using, you should tie or tighten your snood as tightly as possible. On a good day of crabbing, especially if you are using chicken necks, after a couple of hours your baits will start to go missing. If you don't tighten down the baits to your line to the full potential, even more will be missing. Crabs are able to dislodge baits from the line and they will scuttle away with it whenever possible, freeloaders taking that bait you paid for and painstakingly put on the line.

4. Use clips or carabineers at the ends of your main line. It's great to use metal clips or carabineers for attachment points. They allow you to connect your anchor and float lines to your main line in a timely fashion. This will make setting out your line much easier, because all you must do is put a loop (at the end of your main line) in the clip and then you can keep feeding your line overboard. Also, this allows for easy storage of your anchors and floats because when pulling in the line you can simply unclip it and leave the rest of the rig on the boat until next time. When using a 1200 foot line it can be advantageous to have clips in the middle of your line, too. If you're uncertain where crabs are going to be, you can split your trot line into two half-lines and lay them in different areas, to test where the crabs are.

5. At each end of mainline, use a short length of galvanized chain. This will ensure that the line is resting on the bottom, so crabs are able to locate the baits and hang on until the scooper is ready to attack. When using a long trot line, some people like to add another short length of chain in the middle.

*This is the kind of bushel basket we like to see - one full of blue crabs!!*

6. Keep enough slack in the line. Although too much slack can ruin your run and impede on the operations, it's crucial to make sure that your line is

not too tight, either. In most cases it's obvious when your line is too tight; it will be stretched out so you see baits a mile away, and in turn, you will watch as crabs drop the baits because they see what's headed for them. If this is happening to you, it's actually very easy to fix. Go to the end and grab the anchor line, pull it until you feel the anchor lift off the bottom, and then simply drop it back down. This will add a bit of slack into your line and after you run it a few times, the line should level out and run more effectively.

7. Work with the tide and wind, not against it. When it is a bit choppy or windy it can be very hard to crab. Try your best to set the line in a calmer area that's sheltered from the wind. If you know where the crabs are but your spot is troubled by wind, it is crucial that you run your line with the wind at your back. By doing this you will avoid many troubles; going too slow while the wind pushes against your bow, not being able to control where your boat is going, and your bow crashing against the waves and scaring off crabs. Don't worry too much about how this affects your speed, because as long as you remain at idle it's rare to go fast enough to cause crabs to drop off, even with a strong wind at your back.

8. Judge soak-time by trot line length. How long you wait before you begin scooping crabs again, after finishing a run, depends on how long your line is. When using a 600 foot trot line, it's important to let your baits sit for 10 minutes (give or take) before running it again. This is because with a shorter line you will run it faster, and there will be less time for the baits to rest on the bottom. If you're using a 1200 foot trotline, however, by the time you finish your run the first baits you scooped on have already been resting on the bottom for a while so you can go back to the start and run it right away. If crabbing is really hot, even with a shorter line you should start a new run quickly—in some cases the crabs will just eat off your baits, if you give them any extra time.

9. Use a wire-mesh net. Using a nylon or cotton mesh net is a very common mistake for beginner crabbers. Making an investment into a nice wire-mesh net is very important and will lead to a lot less frustration down the road. When using a nylon or cotton net, the crabs will get stuck in the mesh much

easier or the mesh will tangle in the line. You have a lot less control with the mesh, and in turn will miss more crabs. 10. Try your best not to cast a shadow over your trot line. When running the line on a bright day, it's important that you run the trot line in a direction so that your shadow doesn't cast over top your line. If the sun is to your back and a shadow appears over your line, the crabs will see it and let go of the baits before you have time to scoop them. It may mean changing the direction you run the line in or even how you have your trot line laid out, but either way, eliminating that shadow will mean catching more crabs.

The more you go and do it, the more crabs you will catch. Every boat and every trot line is a little bit different, and it may take a season or two to get the trot-lining process down with confidence. But scooping crabs as you watch the sunrise is very relaxing—and eating crabs as you watch the sunset may even be better.

- By Max Rudow

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## FREDERICK MSSA CHAPTER – 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

<b>JANUARY</b>	<b>11</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>14</b>	- <b>Frederick Chapter Fishing Expo – Frederick Fair Grounds</b>
	<b>18</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	26-29	- Baltimore Boat Show – Baltimore Convention Center
	28-29	- Kent Island Chapter Fishing Flea Market
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>8</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	11	- Tri State Marine Flea Market – Deale Md
	<b>15</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	17-18	- Pasadena Flea Market – Earleigh Heights Fire Co, Pasadena, MD
	18	- Dorchester County Flea Market – American Legion Cambridge, MD
	25	- Saltwater Fishing Expo Annapolis Elks #622 – Edgewater MD
<b>25</b>	- <b>Dinner Dance - Frederick Moose Club</b>	
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>8</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>15</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	18-19	- Essex/Middle River Flea Market
<b>APRIL</b>	1-2	- Southern MD Fishing Fair – Solomons Fire Hall
	<b>8</b>	- <b>Frederick Chapter Shakedown Cruise/ Catch &amp; Release Tournament</b>
	<b>12</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	15	- Opening Day - Striped Bass Season
	<b>19</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
<b>MAY</b>	<b>5-7</b>	- <b>Frederick Chapter Spring Rockfish Tournament- Solomons</b>
	5-7	- 33rd Annual MSSA Spring Tournament
	<b>10</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>17</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	<b>19-21</b>	- <b>Frederick Chapter Flounder Tournament – Chincoteague</b>
<b>JUNE</b>	<b>14</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>21</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	16-18	- 27th Annual MSSA Tunament – Ocean City & Wachapreague
<b>JULY</b>	<b>12</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>19</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>9</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>11-13</b>	- <b>MSSA Frederick Chapter Cobia Tournament</b>
	<b>16</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>9</b>	- <b>Chapter Crab Feast and Picnic</b>
	<b>13</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	16-18	- 6 <sup>th</sup> Annual Mid Atlantic Flounder Tournament – OC, Chincoteague, DE
	<b>20</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
<b>OCTOBER</b>	<b>7-14</b>	- <b>Frederick Chapter North Carolina King Mackerel Tournament</b>
	<b>11</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>18</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>8</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>15</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>
	17-19	- 24 <sup>th</sup> Annual MSSA Fall Tournament - Fish 2 of 3
<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>13</b>	- <b>Frederick Meeting</b>
	<b>20</b>	- <b>Frederick Board Meeting</b>

**FREDERICK MSSA CHAPTER – 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

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