



# Weekly Sportfishing Rundown

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As temperatures begin to ease into the eighties, the late summer fishing trend is right on track. Many summer species are preparing to migrate out of the area, while the fall visitors are making an entrance. This mixed bag can make it tough to choose which species to target. Most anglers are opting for either flounder or cobia as both species gather in the lower Bay.

Flounder is always a favorite, and the action is still good this week. Nice flatfish are coming from most anywhere, but the most productive areas are along deep channels, drop offs, and most any lower Bay structure. Good reports are coming from all along the Bay Bridge Tunnel, Back River Reef, and Buoy 42. Live bait, jigs, and fresh strip bait are all working well right now. The lower Bay inlets are also giving up keeper fish, with many ranging to 24-inches in both Lynnhaven and Rudee Inlets. Flatfish will begin moving to inshore and offshore wrecks soon. Nice keeper-sized seabass are also providing good action on many offshore structures.

Cobia action is still a sure thing, with pods of fish appearing on the surface as they prepare to exit Bay waters. These fish are making easy targets as they present in open waters, with many pushing to well over 50-pounds. According to the folks at **Ocean's East 2**, live bait and eels are out fishing bucktails this week. Reports indicate good numbers of cruising fish outside Little Creek Inlet, along the entire Baltimore Channel, near York Spit, and along the Virginia Beach coastline this week.

Schools of bull reds are still roaming the lower Bay shoals, as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Bridge Tunnel. Surf anglers are also pulling bulls out of the surf along Smith Island. Puppy drum are still active in the shallows. The best locations are Lynnhaven and Rudee Inlets, with speckled trout also showing promise on the Poquoson flats and Hungar's creek. Backwater casters are reporting nice sized pups on live bait, Gulp Swimming Mulletts, and cut bait.

Some spot are showing in Lynnhaven and Rudee Inlet, and scattered around the lower Bay. The local piers are also reporting good spot action, especially after a stiff easterly blow. This bite should only improve over the next few weeks. Croaker ranging up to 1.5-pounds are hitting inside Magothy bay near buoy 262, while the biggest hardheads are coming from Oyster, where some fish are pushing to near 2.5-pounds. The folks at **Chris' Bait and Tackle** report that shrimp and squid are the best croaker baits this week. Sea mullet are also taking

shrimp and clam near buoy 262 and along Latimer Shoal off the Eastern Shore Bayside. Tarpon are still active in the backwaters of Oyster, but not for long.

Trigger fish are still everywhere, while sheepshead anglers are also finding good catches this week, with some fish ranging up to 12-pounds. Bill Perron of Virginia Beach took the lead in the state with a nice 4.5-pound trigger he caught near the 1<sup>st</sup> island this week. Gary Joeger of Virginia Beach scored with an 11-pound, 7-ounce sheepshead he found near the High Rise section of the CBBT. Spadefish are also lingering in these same areas.

Nice sized Spanish mackerel are still providing good action from the middle Bay on out to the Chesapeake Light Tower. A few anglers are encountering gaffer mahi along the CB buoy line and near the Tower Reef areas lately.

Virginia deep droppers are still faring well off Virginia. The Rudee inlet Head Boats continue to bring home content anglers toting limits of big tilefish, rosefish, and grouper. Several citation bluelines over 10-pounds are in the mix, along with some nice seabass. Amberjack are still available at the South tower and offshore wrecks, and Jack Crevelle will make a brief showing on the Light Tower over the next few weeks.

Offshore, billfish are still at the top of the list. Very good numbers of white marlin, along with scattered blue marlin, and a few sailfish are thrilling trollers right now. A few big wahoo and bailer and gaffer dolphin are rounding out catches, but tuna are very scattered.

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