



Weekly Sportfishing Rundown

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Finally! Some pretty and fishable weather! This week's spell of moderate conditions pushing to 70 degrees allowed some folks to get out on the water. But more stormy weather and wind will cut the trend short.

With the recent rise in daytime temperatures, anglers are hopeful that this will also help push water temperatures up enough to encourage the spring species to take up residence soon. A rise in water temperatures along with the approach of spring will also help draw the striped bass into local waters again. As for the word on the water lately, folks are still traveling south to catch nice fish to over 40-pounds just north of Oregon Inlet, North Carolina.

Optimistic flounder hunters are watching closely, as the first wave of spring flounder often debuts in mid March. The regulations this year has no closed season, and allows a bag limit of 4 fish per person, at a length of 18.5-inches.

Hopeful pier anglers are anxiously awaiting the reopening of the **Ocean View Fishing Pier** this weekend. The anglers on this pier historically herald the influx of the much anticipated spring run of croaker, sea mullet, and flounder. Although it is still a bit early, warmer weather will surely lure folks to the pier to spend time enjoying the outdoors while wetting a hook.

Boats were able to sample the offshore tautog population this week, with some decent results. Although anglers did not report fast action, one boat managed a few keepers while wreck hopping at the Triangle Wrecks, with one fish topping 15-pounds. Tautog action will pick up near shore and within the Bay, but for now the action is slow.

The Elizabeth River is still giving up some speckled trout, but if you want in on the action it's time to make your move. These fish historically begin to push back out by the end of March when the croaker move in. Although the trout action is not red hot, some decent results are keeping anglers motivated. The best catches are coming from those casting lures. Plenty of puppy drum and some scattered schoolie stripers are also providing entertainment in the same areas. Ned Smith of Norfolk found some luck while enjoying the weather in the Elizabeth River this week when a 5-pound, 5-ounce speck hit his Mirrolure. Nick Wright of Virginia Beach also had a decent day in the River with a 6.5-pounder and a 25.5-inch release to add to his accolades.

Boats venturing out to deeper water between blows are still finding good numbers of blueline tilefish and seabass. Remember to toss the seabass back since the season is closed. Dogfish continue to make fishing in deep water a challenge for now, but these pesks will move out once the water warms up.

Anglers are still driving to Hatteras to get in on the bluefin tuna bite. Many of these fish are well over 100-pounds. A few black fin tuna are also reportedly in the mix.

I am assisting with the organization of the next Virginia Beach IGFA Certified Observer Training Class to be hosted at **Ocean's East 2** tackle shop, on Saturday, March 20, 2010 at 9 a.m. The class instructs experienced anglers, boat captains and crew members as observers for fishing tournaments held across the globe. The IGFA OTC covers topics such as species identification, IGFA saltwater fishing rules and tackles regulations, safety at sea and boating etiquette. Space is limited to 40 people. IGFA OTC applications are available online at http://www.igfa.org/PDF/COP_Application2008.pdf. Pre-registration is required and the \$150 fee covers the cost of the training class, course materials, and a one-year IGFA membership. Please contact IGFA Conservation Director Jason Schratwieser at 954-924-4320 or email him at jschratwieser@igfa.org for additional information.

For more information, go to www.drjball.com