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74

The Art of Ocean Conservation
VOLUME 5, ISSUE 18
WINTER 2015
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GUY HARVEY

MAGAZINE

FREE IT OR EAT IT

King of All Fish

Battling monster Atlantic
Bluefin on stand-up gear

How's your release
technique?

Take our quiz

Keep & Release

The modern art of
taxidermy



COMPLETE ANGLER: Regional vs. State Regulations;
Offshore Kayak Fishing; Capt. Bouncer "No Bananas" Smith

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"But if you land a big tuna after a six-hour fight, fight him man against fish until your muscles are nauseated with the unceasing strain, and finally bring him up alongside the boat, green-blue and silver in the lazy ocean, you will be purified and will be able to enter unabashed into the presence of the very elder gods and they will make you welcome."

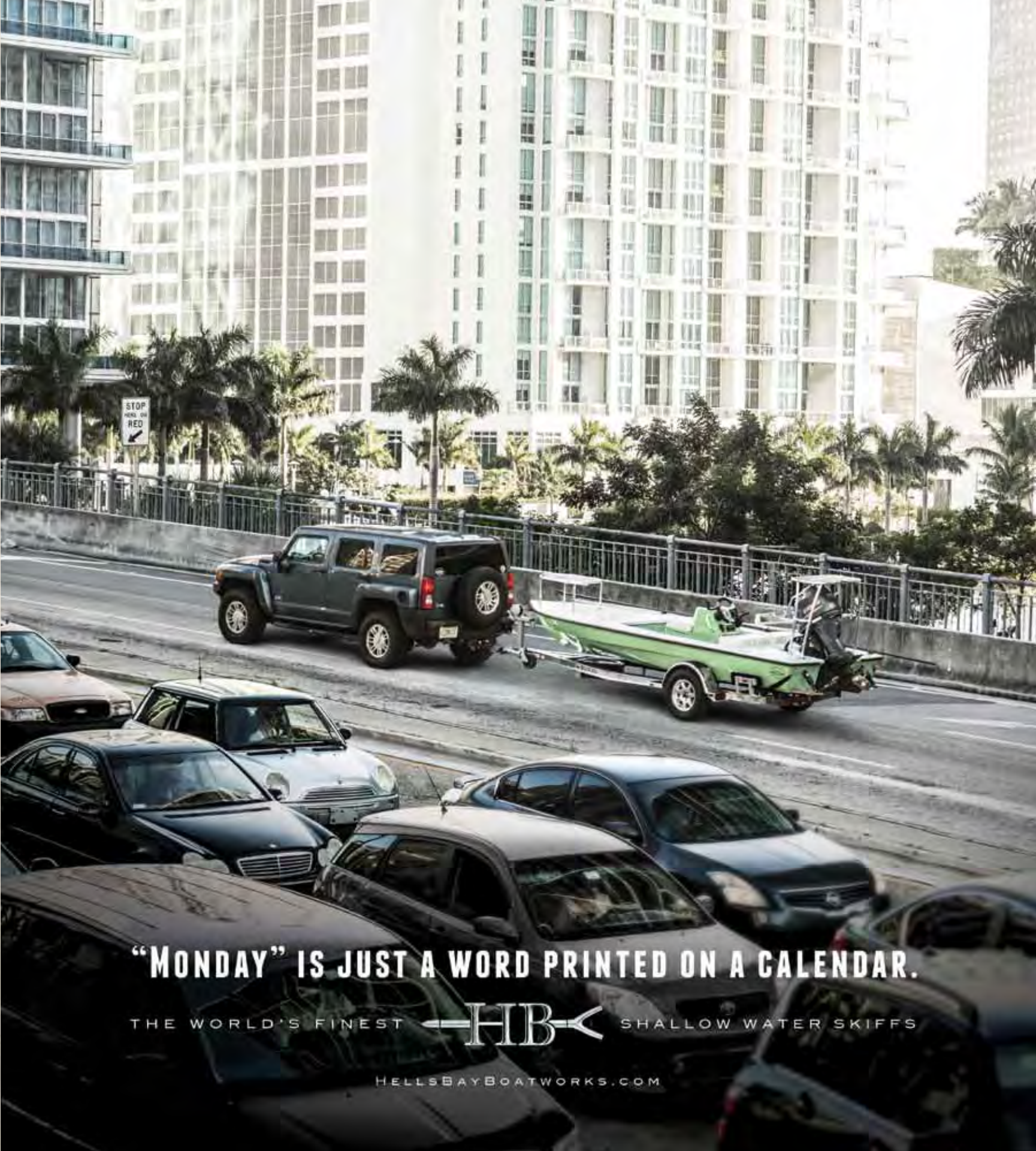
Ernest Hemingway



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KING OF ALL FISH | 32

26 KING OF ALL FISH

If fighting a big fish tests your mettle, then battling a massive bluefin on stand up gear may just test your will to live. A journey to the coast of Prince Edward Island in search of these giants is one of the sport's ultimate quests.

BY **OZZY DELGADO**

35 THE RIGHT (AND WRONG) WAY TO CATCH & RELEASE

Releasing a fish you're not going to eat is a great feeling, but if your technique is sloppy you may have been better off putting that fish in the cooler. A proper release brings big benefits to the fish, and the sport.

BY **DARYL CARSON**

40 KEEP & RELEASE

The taxidermy business used to encourage—even manipulate—anglers to kill their fish for a big trophy, but the modern art of fish mounts means you can release your fish and keep it, too.

BY **RAYMOND DOUGLAS**

42 A YOUNG FORCE OF NATURE

Sean Russell is proof that youthful ambition is far from dead. This recent college grad has fostered a movement that aims to keep our fishing grounds clean while inspiring other young ocean lovers to do the same.

BY **DANNY THORNTON**

52 GREEN POWER

Among the many sleek hulls and oversized outboards of the Ft. Lauderdale Boat Show were some greener options for boating power. Hybrid yachts, natural gas and gas-sipping engines are on the rise.

BY **FRED GARTH**



PHOTO PORTFOLIO | 48

DEPARTMENTS

14 GUY TALK On Location

When someone asks Guy to reveal his honey hole for marlin fishing, the answer is always the same.

BY **DR. GUY HARVEY**

18 WEB Exclusive Content Online

Check out guyharveymagazine.com for a dose of *GHM* anytime. Here are a few of our favorite links.

20 THE BITE News, Notes & Gear

This issue we scoop on two new tournament series, preview a cool rod holder for pick up trucks, discover the epic travels of a bull dolphin and more.

BY **GHM STAFF**

44 PHOTO PORTFOLIO Dr. Guy Harvey

Guy shares some of his favorite shots from his favorite sport.

74 MEET THE CHEF Catch & Cook

Chef John Bonnell is a fishing addict and Texas restaurateur who believes in fresh seafood and big flavor.

BY **GHM STAFF**

78 LAST CAST Hooked on Science

The annual Guy Harvey Fishery Symposium brings together some of the best minds in fishing, but our man still got in the door.

BY **FRED GARTH**



**On the Cover:
New England's Bluefin**
by Guy Harvey

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BIG WATER, LITTLE BOAT | 64

60 DOCK BUZZ
Regionalized Regs

In the push for smarter regulations—ones that benefit both the fishery and the fisherman—some species are being managed on a regional basis rather than state-by-state. In some cases, it might just work.

BY NICK HONACHEFSKY

62 BACKLASH
Capt. Bouncer Smith—Serious Fun

CA catches up with Capt. Bouncer Smith, a legendary Miami captain who is deadly serious about catching fish, helping the sport and having a heck of a good time doing it.

BY CA STAFF

64 GEARHEADS
Get On the Fish

Boat owners are finding it easier than ever to get the electronic tools they need for navigating and finding fish. We run-down six of the most popular all-in-one units on the market.

BY JEFF DENNIS

68 FEATURE
Big Water, Little Boat

Nothing puts you into the action like fishing from a kayak. The proximity to the water, the stealthy approach, the ability to fish nearly anywhere, anytime...Oh, did we mention this is offshore?

BY THOMAS DERBES

Complete Angler (CA) is our “magazine within the magazine,” dedicated to hard-core fishing enthusiasts and delivering access to experts, the latest in fishing gear and the hottest fishing spots on the planet.



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German photographer Daniel Göz was born in France in 1974. He holds an M.Sc in geography but works as a photographer and filmmaker, covering fishing and outdoor related themes. His specialty is underwater imagery of rare fish, including free-swimming blue marlin, yellowfin tuna and cold water species such as Atlantic salmon. He has produced award-winning niche films such as "Tapâm" and "Gaula", but also

content for large national networks such as Animal Planet's "River Monsters" with Jeremy Wade. His current project focuses on the elusive European lake trout. www.danielgoez.com

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THOMAS DERBES

Thomas Derbes II is a student at the University of West Florida, studying marine biology. Growing up on the water in the Florida Panhandle fueled his passion for fishing. He caught his first redfish at age three and quickly began to hone his saltwater fishing skills. At a young age, he had his first experience kayak fishing with his father on the trout flats behind his house. Since then, he has fished up and

down the Panhandle looking for redfish, trout and flounder—all on a kayak. He now targets offshore fish in the summer months and hunts inshore fish in the colder months. Thomas will graduate this spring, and plans to attend graduate school, pursuing a PhD in aquaculture.

LIONFISH-APALOOZA



ON LOCATION: TROPIC STAR LODGE, PINAS BAY, PANAMA.

One question I get asked all the time is where is my favorite place to fish? Without hesitation I reply Panama and in particular the Tropic Star Lodge. The next question is... why?

There's a lot of incredible fishing in Central America but my heart is at TSL because I've been going there since 1991, first with Raleigh Werking, who was chasing light tackle world records at the time. Since then I have been twice per year totaling over fifty different expeditions. In that time my children spent many hours fighting big fish and I shot at least a dozen different TV shows and documentaries from this one location. More IGFA world records have been set there than in any other fishing location on the planet. That's how consistent the fishing has been all these years.

Recently, my wife Gillian noted that I had actually spent a year of my life there! I've had so many fantastic experiences and photos that I could write a book about TSL. And so I did. It is called Panama Paradise.

The emphasis here is on marlin fishing as blue marlin and black marlin are there all year round, though the best time for blacks is December to April. Sailfish come and go and striped marlin show up in March and April. The hot spot is the Pinas Reef where one catches live bait and puts them out right away for a

black marlin. Giant dolphin fish, called dorado, are there all year as well as yellowfin tuna which often run with schools of spotted dolphins. I have been in the water with some amazing baitball experiences there filming the destruction of bait schools by tunas, dolphins and sharks. Then there is inshore fishing primarily for roosterfish, big almaco jacks, wahoo, cubera snapper, broomtail grouper. Anglers use poppers, fly or live bait with great results. And as you are doing all that you are surrounded by the backdrop of lush, pristine Darien rainforest.

Like many small countries, Panama's marine conservation record is complicated. Panama now protects



GUY HARVEY, PhD

is an internationally-acclaimed artist, fisherman, scientist, and world traveler, who devotes much of his time and money toward ocean conservation.



billfish legally for recreational fishing only and they are not supposed to be landed. By Presidential decree, there's a 20-mile, no commercial fishing zone that stretches out from the lodge. However, there are 1,300 long-line permits issued to local artisanal fishermen and they are often apparent when you are fishing further offshore. I keep reminding successive Panamanian Presidents that billfish are much more valuable to the Panamanian economy (and those of all Central American and Caribbean countries) as a living resource rather than as a fillet in the fish market. When they realize that tourism dollars have a more profound impact than killing fish, they may begin to limit long-line fishing.

Of course, marine conservation was not even on the radar when TSL was founded In 1961 by Texas oil tycoon Ray Smith, who built the lodge to cater to his friends and clients. Two changes in ownership saw the Kittredge family take over in 1976 and they have been doing a great job ever since then. Nowadays Terri (Kittredge) and husband Mike Andrews own

and run the lodge and their commitment, both to conservation and to customers is evident in everything they do. For those of you who don't know TSL is about 100 miles from the nearest road in the Darien jungle so you have to get there by boat or plane. The accommodation, the gardens and pool and above all the staff are amazing. Fishing Director Albert Battoo runs a fleet of 31-foot Bertrams with some of the best big game crews in the world dedicated to responsible catch and release fishing.

One of my recent excursions was in August when I took Dr. George Hanbury, President of Nova Southeastern University to TSL. He ended up catching and

releasing three blue marlin, several large sharks, lots of sailfish, dorado and tuna. At the end of November I fished the annual torneo now benefiting the GH Ocean Foundation. We caught a couple of blues around the 400 lb. mark on the practice day and two blacks over 300 lbs. during the event placing third in the tournament.

While the world constantly changes around us, one aspect that has not changed in the 23 years I've been going to TSL is the amazing fishing. If you haven't been there yet, you should put it on your bucket list. It's not only a fantastic fishing trip, but also inspires a passion for conserving all of our fishing resources.

Tight lines. Guy. 🐟



Tropic Star Lodge, on Panama's Pinas Bay, is a remote outpost accessible only by boat or plane. Commercial fishing is prohibited within 20 miles of the lodge and guests have access to a fleet of 31-foot Bertrams with highly trained crews.



A D

MERCURY



GUY ONLINE

CHECK OUT THE LATEST AT



Symposium Hits Home Run

The Guy Harvey Fisheries Symposium drew an all-star crowd. Many issues were discussed and debated, from controlling lionfish to the new red snapper regulations. Here is a wrap up.



Gatorade Bottle Lure?

Sick of just throwing your plastic bottles away? Well, here is a man who has turned bottles into big game lures with success!



Aquaponics Research Moves Forward

Aquaponics is the art of growing vegetables and seafood simultaneously. USF and Mote Marine Labs have teamed up to advance this growing field of aquaculture.



Panhandle Sailfish on Kayak

Kayak fishing is growing, and so is the size of the target species! Pensacola fishing guide Jason Downs gives you the information you need to target this species in the coastal waters off the Panhandle.



Bahama's Government Closes Nassau Grouper

The highly prized and 'endangered' Nassau Grouper finally has a closed season in the Bahamas. In the past three decades their stock has declined by 60%.

AD

Nu-1ce

NEWS, NOTES & GEAR

Offshore Fishing League

New professional fishing league coming online in 2015

The Offshore Fishing League plans to take big game fishing to the masses, with a season-long competition spread and broadcast on NBCSN. A maximum of 30 elite teams comprised of anglers, captains and deckhands will compete from June through March on a 14-location circuit. At the end of the season, one team will be crowned the Offshore Fishing League World Champion.

“The OFL is ready for primetime: tough battles on the high seas, adrenaline-pumping action and huge blue marlin pulled from the depths, all set in the sport’s finest destinations,” said Carlos Suito, CEO of the OFL.

The intense competition will be telecast on NBCSN starting summer 2015, and offer fans a front row seat to the excitement of every part of offshore fishing. The all catch-and-release format will allow multiple line classes to increase point value resulting in accurate, real-world skill demonstration by the captains and anglers. The OFL fleet will also fish a tournament circuit that encompasses over 5,000 nautical miles throughout the Atlantic and Caribbean, testing both boats and crews.

Capt. Peter B. Wright has been named commissioner of the OFL. He will take an active role in managing the relationship between the league and the participating teams. Serving as advisors are some of the sport’s top names, including International Game Fish Association (IGFA) Legendary Captains Ron Hamlin, Bark Garnsey and Charles Perry, as well as Capt. George Sawley. Sam



White serves the league as championship director.

With a strong commitment to marine conservation, the Offshore Fishing League will feature a 100% catch-and-release format. A portion of the League’s proceeds will support the IGFA and The Billfish Foundation to help ensure a bright future for sportfishing and all billfish species.

“The OFL will be an advocate for billfish,” said Suito. “Our goal is to share the wonder of sportfishing with the world.”

For more information, visit www.OFL.com

The OFL will be covered in primetime TV, bringing big game fishing to the masses. An official launch for the league was held at last year’s Ft. Lauderdale Boat Show, but the first season begins Spring 2015.



GHO Launches New App and New Tournament

Want to turn every fishing trip into a tournament trip? Well, thanks to the folks at Guy Harvey Outpost, there’s an app for that. GHO recently announced the release of the iGHOFISH app. It serves as the record-keeper for the company’s new “Fish for the Future” fishing tournament. Running through 2015, the tournament is open to anglers anywhere in the world, with various divisions and awards for 20 different game fish species.

To get started, anglers just have to download the app, register and then log their fishing trips anywhere in the world. Awards will be given the end of the tournament for 10 species in a Master Angler Division and 10 species in the King of the Seas Division, plus one wildcard. A monthly sweepstakes for all anglers who log a trip that month will also be awarded, which means anglers have a chance to win even if they don’t catch anything at all.

The unique app-based format for the tournament is designed to



collect valuable trip and catch data from as many anglers as possible. The app uses software developed by the Snook and Gamefish Foundation to record tournament catches and will automatically populate the foundation’s database of over 130 inshore and offshore species.

“This tournament and our iGHOFISH app are a way of making citizen science just as much fun as fishing,” says Cliff Jensen, director of Fishing Programs for Guy



Harvey Outpost. “Not all of us who love to fish have a PhD like Guy Harvey, but with this iGHOFISH, app every angler can make a difference by collecting data that helps put those PhDs to work.”

There is no cost to enter the Guy Harvey Outpost “Fish for the Future” fishing tournament. The iGHOFISH app is free and available for both iOS and Android devices. For more information, visit www.guyharveyoutpost.com.

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Upcoming Billfish Tournaments

43rd Annual Gold Cup Team Fishing Tournament

Palm Beach, Florida

January 11-15

The Gold Cup, hosted by the Sailfish Club of Florida, was founded in 1972 by John Rybovich, and its aim is to test the skills of anglers catching and releasing sailfish off the east coast of Florida. The Gold Cup is a perpetual trophy maintained by the Sailfish Club and is a coveted prize in competitive sportfishing.

www.sailfishclub.com

Blacktip Challenge Tournament

Fernandina Beach to Key Biscayne, Florida

January 27-February 1, 2015

The Blacktip Challenge is a catch, tag and release shark fishing tournament on Florida's East Coast. It combines competitive sportfishing with scientific research and education. Anglers that participate in the tournament are educated about proper shark tagging techniques and procedures and take part in a joint research effort with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Apex Predator Cooperative Shark Tagging Program and the International Land-Based Shark Fishing Association.

www.blacktipchallenge.com

Annual Charity Billfish Blast Tournament

Key Largo, Florida

February 13-14

This event is a fundraiser for the Twin Palms Center for the Disabled, a 501(C)(3) Corporation that provides a unique day-program for individuals diagnosed with developmental delays. The Center gives these adults the opportunity to become active participants at home and in their communities through creative instructional programs.

www.twinpalmscenter.com

Burning Wahoo Tournament & Festival

Grand Bahama

February 26-March 1, 2015

The Burning Wahoo combines a two-day fishing tournament with special events, including the signature Burning Wahoo Bonfire created by artist Bobby Little. Hosted by the Old Bahama Bay Resort, the tournament features over \$30,000 in cash and prizes.

Jimmy Johnson National Billfish Championship

March 18-22, 2015

Key Largo, Florida

The tournament is hosted at Jimmy Johnson's Big Chill in Key Largo, FL. Participating teams will join Jimmy and other celebrities to compete for the National Billfish Championship ring and an estimated \$500,000 purse.

www.bluewatermovements.com

Casa de Campo International Blue Marlin Classic

La Romana, Dominican Republic

March 17, 2015-March 22, 2015

The Casa de Campo International Blue Marlin Classic is a two-day, all-release team event under IGFA guidelines, in which all points accumulated on one boat by one team throughout the competition determine the overall winners. Teams may be comprised of up to four (4) anglers—minimum of two (2) anglers per team. There will be one team per boat, accompanied by a different Official Certified Observer each day of fishing.

www.intlbillfishturns.com



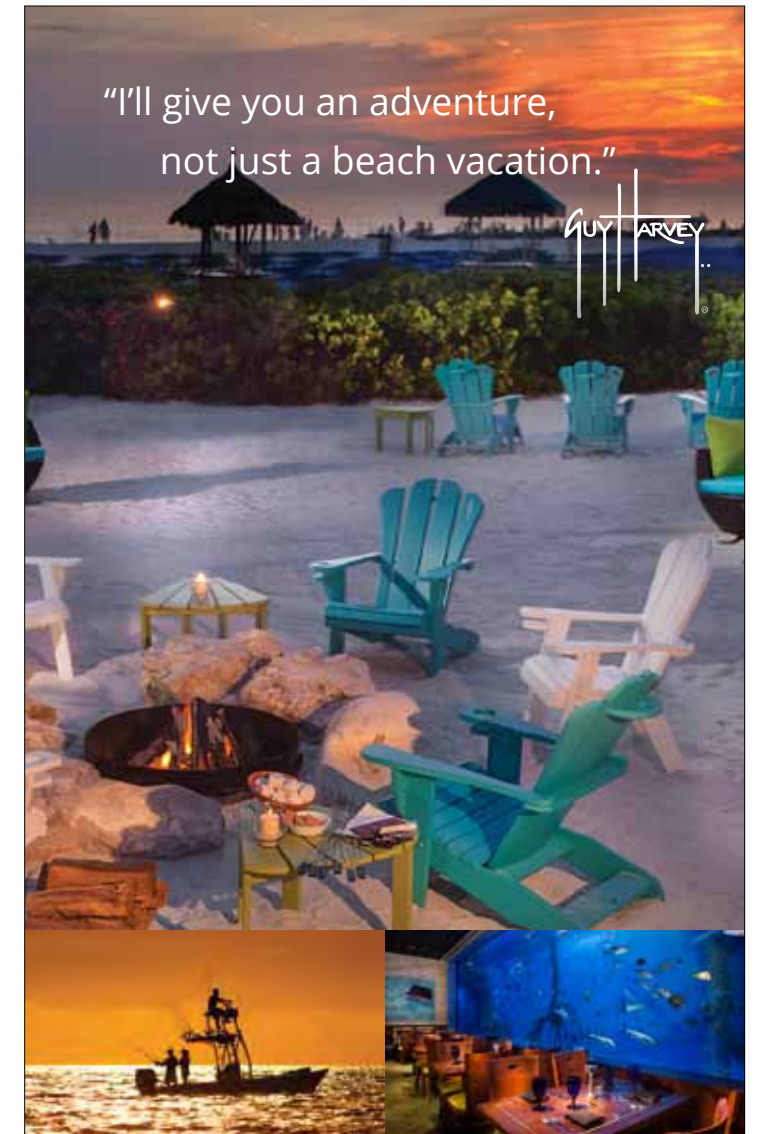
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This truck-mounted rod rack is designed to transport expensive rods safely and easily. The two-part rack has a base that installs into the truck bed using the existing tie-down bolts, so no extra holes are required in the vehicle. The portable

rod rack can then be loaded and unloaded quickly using a four-knob system. For security, a stainless locking cable runs through rod eyelets when the vehicle is left unattended. A black powder coat finish is durable, attractive and blends into the truck bed. The system is currently designed for Dodge RAM trucks, but models for other brands are in development.

MSRP: \$499.99

www.boatoutfitters.com



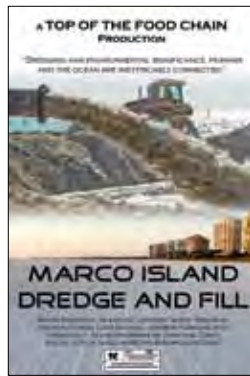
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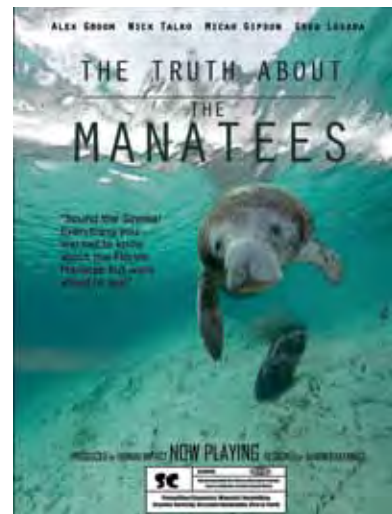
Top student films from the Rookery Bay/Discovery Channel program covered topics from threatened species to habitat restoration and can be viewed online.

Rookery Bay Lets Students Play Shark Week

BY RENEE WILSON

Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve protects 110,000 acres of coastal lands and waters near Naples. It's a coastal treasure for anglers, and it's a hot spot for nature lovers. Among the Reserves' many programs, it hosts field trips throughout the year for school kids, including more than 500 local high schoolers each year. Students get an up-close and personal inspection of marine life in the estuarine environment, learning about the plants and animals that thrive in the bay, including sea hares, urchins, pipefish and some unusual species, such as the polka-dot batfish, which is a regular find in the net.

But more than just instilling a sense of wonder about the natural environment, the staff at Rookery Bay also looks for ways to make a long-term impact on students. In recent years, that has meant turning students into storytellers, and getting them to dig deeper into local issues. Since 2012, the Reserve has partnered with Lely High School and Discovery Education—the education arm of Discovery Channel—to engage students in science through



video, making short films about critical habitats and species.

This past year, approximately 120 students teamed up to conduct research and produce short videos about environmental and marine issues facing their community. The Friends of Rookery Bay funded the purchase of camera equipment and during the process, students were mentored by a Discovery Channel associate producer of Shark Week. Students produced films exploring subjects from artificial reefs and dredging impacts to critical species such as manatees and stone crabs.

The Reserve hosted a film premiere and awards ceremony for the students, their families, faculty and the public. Discovery Education presented awards for the top five videos, and the students who produced the top video received trophies and a cash award.

To view the student films, visit www.rookerybay.org and type "Honor Students" into the search bar.

Satellite Tag Reveals Dolphin Migration

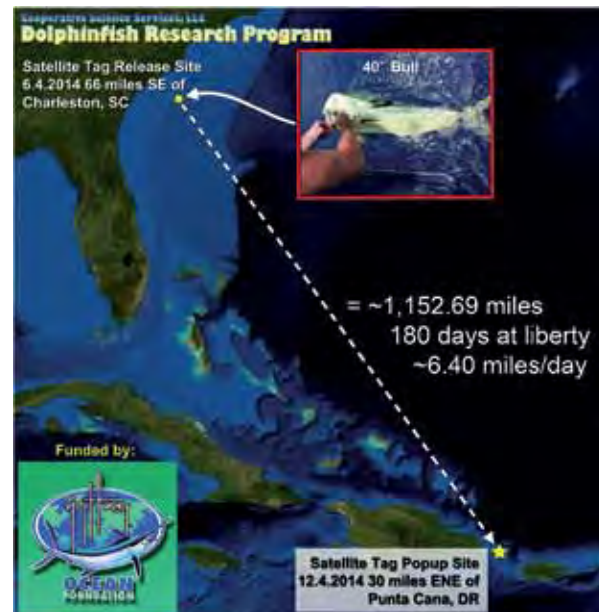
BY JEFF DENNIS
GHM INSIDER

Tagging dolphinfish for research has been going on for some time, but until recently, it has meant using plastic darts to tag fish with the slim hope they would be caught again with the tag still in place. Now, with the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation helping to fund the use of satellite tags in partnership with the Dolphinfish Research Program, new migration data is beginning to pop up.

It began in early summer 2014 when the dolphin bite off of Charleston, South Carolina, was running hot. Michael Mattson on the My Three Sons knew the time was right.

"We had been in dolphin all day June 3, and I asked Don Hammond if he wanted to try and deploy his satellite tags on the next day," said Mattson. "So on June 4, 2014, we actually tagged two bull dolphin, which were both judged to be over 20 lbs."

It only took a couple of days for the first tag to pop up—a bad sign that the dolphin had probably been eaten by a predator.



Mattson figured it was only a matter of time before the second tag met the same fate, but that day never came. Instead, the tag detached right on schedule six months later. The date was December 4. It floated to the surface to transmit data to a waiting satellite.

Remarkably, the data showed that the bull dolphin swam all the way to the Dominican Republic, which is a distance of over 1,100 miles. The dolphin is estimated to be 50 in. in length now and still carries a dart tag, but it's already contributed a wealth of information to researchers. It's the first dolphinfish that remained with its satellite tag for the full 180 days, avoiding both anglers and predators along its incredible oceanic trek.

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*“But if you land a **BIG TUNA** after a six-hour fight, fight him **MAN AGAINST FISH** until your muscles are nauseated with the unceasing strain, and finally*

BRING HIM UP ALONGSIDE THE BOAT,
green-blue & silver in the lazy ocean,
YOU WILL BE PURIFIED

and will be able to enter unabashed into the presence of the very elder gods and
THEY WILL MAKE YOU WELCOME.”

— Ernest Hemingway

KING OF ALL FISH

BY OZZY DELGADO



The little shoreside town of North Lake, home to the seasonal PEI tuna charter fleet.

If you travel far enough up the eastern United States, you'll eventually run out of territory shadowed by the ol' red, white, and blue, and come to the land of the maple leaf. That's right. Canada. Where the people are supposed to be friendly, and everything is clean, and the ever-vigilant Mounties make boy scouts look like punks escaped from juvenile detention wards.

Yes, this is a land of fine people. And while all the stereotypes about a place are far from definitive, I can say the Mounties I met on my recent trip were all amazingly polite. More importantly, Canada's east coast has a reputation for enormous fish, and I can tell you first-hand that this is not fiction. It's a back-breaking fact.

The Gulf of St. Lawrence stretches away from rolling green hills that break up into a mix of sandy beaches and jagged, red cliffs. Offshore, the water is cold, dark...and cold. It's also wonderfully rich in nutrients, and is visited by one of nature's great beasts, the bluefin tuna. This apex predator draws anglers to the shores of Prince Edward Island each year, all of them seeking to do battle with one of the most prized sport fish in the Atlantic Ocean.

For a long time I've wanted to make this trip, and my chance came earlier this year. My connection for chasing bluefin was Tony MacDonald, owner of Tony's Tuna Fishing. He called before the trip to confirm some details.

"Hi, Ozzy. Got ya booked for a cabin and fishing. Everything is good to go."

I felt like a teenage girl waiting for a One Direction concert. This was going to be pure awesomeness. And yes, that's a real word. Better yet, I would be joined by my friend, marine artist Raymond "Doug" Douglas, owner of King Sailfish Mounts. We're avid offshore anglers, but this trip would be a new experience for us both.

Bluefin fishing happens in summer, when these super beasts follow the (relatively) warm waters of the Gulf Stream north in search of rich, fatty mackerel. The Gulf Stream passes just off the coast of Prince Edward Island, making the spot a prime location for tuna seekers. The north side of P.E.I. is where anglers find the best action, but it wasn't until 1965 that island fishermen began to exploit the tuna fishery. The town of North Lake calls itself the "Tuna Capital of the World," and they make a good case for claiming the title. They just point to the gargantuan, 1,496-lb. fish caught there in 1979 by Ken Fraser. Today, of course, such a beauty would be rare, but that catch helped cement the region's reputation as a bluefin battleground.

We flew into Charlottetown, picked up a rental car and made the hour journey to Tony's Cottages. From the first morning, I decided I liked fishing here. There's no need for crazy, early morning wake up calls, because you don't need to be at the dock until about seven o'clock. Too late, you think? Not at all, since it's less than a three-mile run from boat slip to fishing grounds.

Tony's Tuna Fishing fleet consists of seven modern and powerful vessels



One of several boats in Tony's Tuna Fishing fleet, rigged and ready to battle giants. Below: Ken Fraser poses with his gargantuan, 1496lb Bluefin Tuna in 1979.

equipped with all the creature comforts you want when fishing the big water of the North Atlantic. These boats are loaded with hot water heaters, microwaves, tables, bunks, washrooms, a furnace and much more.

"Here is beer, soda, water and a container of lobster rolls," says Tony, giving us an orientation of the boat. Umm...did he say lobster rolls? As it turns out, these guys harvest lobster just before the tuna season begins, so there's an ample supply of fresh lobster to be used as snacks. Let me just say it beats the heck out of beef jerky. I'm starting to love me some Canada.

"Ozzy, are you doing standup?" asks Cory Chaisson. Tony's deckhand breaks the lobster spell with his question. I look over and am now memorized by the sheer size of the tackle on board. Using that rod and reel in stand-up gear sounds like shooting a cruise missile off my shoulder.

"Let's do the fighting chair first so you get a feel of the fight and then we will switch over to standup," says Tony after sensing my hesitation. Now I love me some polite Canadians.

We hit the water and start looking for schools of mackerel, and they aren't

hard to find. On the horizon, we can see the commercial fleet at work. Even if the mackerel seem scarce, Tony's Tuna Fishing has an advantage. His family—brothers, cousins and uncles—all have commercial boats, so it's easy for Tony to keep up on the mackerel run and keep his customers in fresh bait.

We pull the boat right into the melee and mackerel practically jump in the boat. In short order, we use sabiki rigs to fill the live wells. We then run to our destination and pull out the big guns (130s), and start a slow drift around a nearby reef. Conditions are absolutely ideal and all we can do now is wait.

Minutes slowly turn to hours, but we're not discouraged—it's hard to be depressed when you're eating lobster rolls. Lunch comes around and it is obvious we're in for a slow day. Corey keeps on chumming the water with cuts of fresh mackerel, but we see no sign of tuna in the fish finder. Tony soon disappears into the cabin. He emerges a bit later with a pot of steamed mussels. O, Can-a-da!

By 3 pm, the doubts are starting to set in, but as everyone knows, once you start ignoring the rods, things usually happen. "Fish on!" Corey says. The screaming reel sets off a remarkable choreography among the crew. We





Clockwise from top left: Raymond Douglas points at his estimated 850lb beast. Inside the PEI's Basin Head Fisheries Museum. A sight you will never forget, a massive fish alongside the boat. A certificate of catch-and-release is given to those who land a tuna.

all retrieve the rods and I slip into the fighting chair. The reel is losing line fast and it feels like we've hooked into a bullet train. Tony and Cory both grab the rod and position it in the rod gimbal.

I had been coached on what to do and I have a plan, but this battle is unlike anything I've ever done.

Half an hour into the fight, after inching and gaining momentum, the captain decides to put more pressure on the fish by increasing the drag—over 40 pounds.

Finally, I see the fish surface only several feet from us and Cory grabs the leader. He slowly muscles it to the side of the boat. Eager to see it, I unbuckle myself from the reel and lean over the gunnel.

"Holy Crap!" (Wait, can you say that up here?) Tony laughs at me, but it's impossible not to go into full geeked-out tourist mode. I hooked a tuna on steroids. The fish's tail

loudly bangs against the boat and the body seems to be the width of a Prius. The crew estimates 750 pounds of angry bluefin flesh. Length is 96" and the fat girth indicates this is a healthy fish. After soaking in the moment and plenty of high fives to go around, we call it a day. It's time to recharge because tomorrow will be Doug's turn at a giant.

Our second day proves to be a mirror image of the first—calm and sunny



P.E.I

Prince Edward Island is a gorgeous place. It's the smallest and least populated of the Canadian provinces, and the economy runs on agriculture and fishing. The coastline has long beaches, dunes, cliffs, saltwater marshes, and numerous bays and harbors. Getting to and from Tony's Cottages is easy from the Charlottetown airport. Built in 2012, the three cottages are set on an open and private stretch of land nestled in the seaside community of South Lake, minutes from the marina. On our second afternoon, we worked in a visit to the Basin Head Fisheries Museum. Anne Garrett, site director, was nice enough to open the doors after hours and give us a tour. If you get the chance, this is a great stop. It has artifacts and images that detail the history of both the island and its amazing fishery.

weather. With a live well full of tuna candy, the plan is to go around the same spot as day one. But today, Tony brings out a kite and two flat lines. The key to enticing these fish on kite is to keep the bait just in the surface without the tuna seeing the line. Bluefin have excellent eyesight; plus, keeping the bait up top means you get to see the water boil on a massive strike.

Again, the fishing is slow through the morning, but we have high hopes for an afternoon bite. When it's time for lunch, Tony vanishes into the cabin, soon to emerge with a bowl of scallops in garlic butter sauce. Oh, and more lobster rolls.

Waiting for the bite, it's a good time to catch up with

Tony and get to know more about the fishery. Bluefin are highly regulated here. One fish can be harvested per season and anglers can enter a lottery for a shot at another fish. Late September through October is the best time for landing prized fish since the tuna have fattened up throughout the season. With the vast majority of fish being released, crews try to keep fights under an hour to keep survivability

rates at close to 100%.

"It can take hours to land a big tuna," says Tony. "And while we want everyone that comes here to enjoy a great battle, we need to protect the fish as well."

Our leisurely conversation is quickly interrupted. Within minutes of yesterday's bite, we have a fish on! Doug gets in the chair and it's apparent that he's no rookie. Still, fighting a massive bluefin is different than battling other big fish, like a big marlin. Doug is in for something new. Close to an hour later, an estimated 850-lb., 102-in. fish is brought to the side of the boat. It feels great to be two-for-two!

Day three dawns and it's obvious the weather has turned. The sunny mornings have been replaced with cloudy skies and a boat rocking 20 to 25 knots of wind. And the forecast is for things to get worse. Oh, did I mention today is my day for stand-up gear?

To this point, we've been fishing on Tony's *L'il Miss Maddy*, but today we're switching to a new ride. We'll be with Tony's brother, Captain Bradley MacDonald and deckhand Matt Rose on the *Princess Nova*. This crew has a reputation for putting you on the fish. Doug and I are excited, but the idea of battling a giant bluefin on stand-up gear while the boat rocks all over the place in five-foot seas is fueling a good bit of anxiety.

We take a short ride out to the fishing grounds. Buck decides to stay as close to shore as possible, because where we were the first two days is not protected by the island, and it's starting to blow even worse. With all our lines in the water, I'm fitted into the harness and, luckily, I have my AFTCO foul weather gear to keep me





dry and warm. As nervous as I am, I still want the bite to happen early in the morning. Sure enough, my prayers are answered.

"We have a fish on!" says Buck. As the fish takes line, I rush to put on the harness and make my way to the rod. Now it's me against the fish...and the clock. With just an hour to get this beast to the boat, I hope it's a smaller specimen than what we've caught already. I reel furiously each time the tuna gives me a chance to gain line. About 20 minutes into the fight, a good distance off the stern, the fish makes its first appearance. So much for hooking a smaller fish—this one looks plenty big.

Despite the cool weather, things are getting hot inside my foul weather gear and I get Doug to open the zippers. My arms are sore and I ask for some water. There's nothing to do now but dig deep and put pressure on the fish. The harness really allows your body weight to hold and pump the reel, but I feel like I'm about to be snatched overboard any minute.

Still concerned about the clock, I try to put as much pressure on the fish as possible. Captain Bradley decides to increase the drag, which puts even more strain on the gear and me. It feels like an eternity fighting a fish this size, and I am hope I can

make it to the end.

"Almost there, Ozzy," says Matt, but the stubborn fish decides to take a power break at 70 feet. More drag is put on the fish and the captain tries to help with the boat, but Mr. Tuna is not cooperating. I can feel every muscle in my body starting to give up and my back feels strained to the limit.

After a grueling 10-minute standoff at 70 feet, the fish starts to tire and creep up the water column. Inch by inch, I start gaining line on it until we see color. I get a lot of "come on, Ozzy" and it's encouraging.

Once Matt and the captain grabbed the leader, it's an amazing relief. The battle is clocked at 55 minutes, and the 100-in. fish is estimated at 850 lbs. UTOPIA!

As fishermen, we love to debate the merits of fighting different species. After this experience, I am convinced nothing that swims in the ocean compares with giant tunas. In 1922, Ernest Hemingway reported in the *Toronto Star Weekly* that the giant bluefin tuna is "the king of all fish."

After my Canadian adventure, I politely agree.

Special thanks to Captains Tony and Brad and their professional crews for a great experience and, of course, the obscene number of lobster rolls. For information on Tony's Tuna Fishing, visit www.tonystunafishing.com.

The facial expressions say it all, Ozzy Delgado's grueling fight with his prized 850lb tuna. Middle: Tuna follow the mackerel run, feeding on the abundant schools of oily baitfish. Photo: Adrian Gray. Opposite: A true accomplishment, battle a giant on stand up gear.



The Right [and wrong] Way to Catch & Release



“We’re not promoting ‘catch and release’ over ‘keep it and eat it’; we’re just saying that if you *are* going to release a fish, you should give it the best possible chance of survival.”

This is the message of the FishSmart campaign, articulated by Andy Loftus, and it’s hard to argue with such reasonableness. Why kill a fish with a sloppy release, when you can do it correctly and send it on its merry way to grow and breed and help improve fishing for the future? As the name implies, it’s just being smart. But perhaps more important than that, it’s also being effective.

One example of the importance of proper catch and release methods was in play in early 2014 when the Pacific Fishery Management Council decided to reduce the release mortality for three species of Pacific rockfish. “Release mortality” describes how many released fish still die once they’re back in the water. Until recently, the regulations for rockfish assumed 100% mortality for fish caught from 30 fathoms (approximately 180 ft.) and deeper because it was assumed that all fish were “surface released.” But the latest research indicates that using descending devices—that release fish at depth—significantly improves survival rates. As a result, the council has reduced the mortality estimate at all depths deeper than 20 fathoms to as low as 23% when using descending devices. This, in turn, will affect future Rockfish management decisions, including catch limits.

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The FishSmart folks love these kinds of stories. The research on Pacific Rockfish releases was done before FishSmart came along, but it was the group's regional workshop that helped to coalesce the research findings and discussion that formed the basis of the Council's decision. And it's a perfect example of what FishSmart has been doing for the past three years—getting anglers, scientists and regulators together in workshops to hammer out these issues.

The primary focus has been to put fishing regulations—those that deal with release procedures—through a vetting process. It's been a long haul of collecting the best science on the subject and then putting it through a filter of common sense to make sure suggested techniques or regulations will really work in the field. And workshops have been held all around the country, even connecting experts from different regions so they can cross-pollinate ideas and techniques. Every fishery is different, but there are plenty of similarities that allow different groups to learn from each other.

"In New England and the Mid-Atlantic area, using deep-water release devices is basically new ground," says Loftus. "A few people had heard of them, and more were familiar with venting because they or a friend had fished in Florida, but they've got a big issue with cod in New England and black sea bass in the Mid Atlantic. Now, the NOAA folks are



Proper catch and release techniques require proper tools from dehookers to descender devices, depending on fishing location and species. Check out fishsmart.org for information or look for the FishSmart name on approved products at your local retailer.

starting to introduce anglers to these kinds of release techniques in these areas."

The workshops examined each state's regulations, and while some things have been confirmed as sound practice, others were found not to work as well as thought. The venting requirement for reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico is a good example of the latter. It became evident during the FishSmart workshop in Tampa that the science behind venting wasn't necessarily all that good. Most of the studies examining the technique had been done using a well-trained scientist to vent the fish, not a typical angler on a rocking boat. So, after the workshop, the move to repeal the venting requirement got a boost and was finally approved last year.

In the end, the FishSmart workshops have resulted in a list of Best Practices for releasing fish that are backed by both good science and good sense. (See the "Release Quiz" below.) Now, the goal is to work with the fishing community to get the word out and educate anglers.

"We want fishermen to know that using best practices, and using descending devices can have a significant impact on fish survival, fisheries modeling and fisheries management," says Loftus, "and that will impact their future angling opportunities. That's what we're seeing with Pacific rockfish and in the Gulf, and it's what we can see in other regions around the country, too."

For more information, check out www.fishsmart.org.



FishSmart Tackle

Anglers are known to spend almost as much time trolling the aisles of their favorite retailers as they do on the water. Now when they're shopping, they can quickly identify gear that will help improve their catch and release technique. The ASA's FishSmart Tackle program has established guidelines for any manufacturer to have their equipment labeled with the FishSmart name if it helps promote the campaign's Best Practices. From rubberized nets to dehooking tools and circle hooks and much more, it's an easy way to find catch-and-release-friendly gear.

Release Quiz

Chances are, you think you're pretty good at releasing fish, but there's a phenomenon psychologists refer to as "illusory superiority." It turns out, we all think we do things a little better than the next guy or gal. Well, here's your chance to prove it when it comes to releasing fish. Take this quiz and see how you stack up. The answers, along with a full description of the FishSmart Best Practices can be found on the next page.



1. The first step in a successful release is...

- a. giving the hook a couple of hard shakes to see if the fish falls back in the water quickly.
- b. yelling at your buddy to get the net out of the locker under the hatch that's beneath the cooler he's currently standing on.
- c. making sure your fish is small enough for a "toilet release" if you decide not to keep it once you get home.
- d. having a game plan and the tools you need already in place before your hook hits the water.

2. If you start catching too many fish that you can't keep, either because they are the wrong size or wrong species, you should...

- a. switch to lighter tackle so you can enjoy the challenge of a better fight.
- b. keep illegal fish anyway, just buried under some beer at the bottom of the cooler.
- c. pour a little of your favorite beverage over the side of the boat for good luck.
- d. move to a new fishing hole or change your bait and tackle to avoid unwanted fish.

3. To make releases faster and less stressful on the fish, you should use...

- a. treble hooks, because they hold great when lifting fish over the gunnel and into the boat.
- b. lightweight J hooks, because they rust away faster when the fish swallows them.

- c. any hook with a barb, because you don't want to lose the fish and you can always just cut the leader.
- d. appropriate sized circle hooks that won't gut-hook a fish.

4. When landing a fish you should...

- a. use the lightest drag setting possible to maximize the fun.
- b. catch the fish and then cast it back out a few times to reel in again while your buddy gets some action shots with his phone.
- c. drag out the fight and throw some extra chum in the water to attract sharks, barracuda or dolphins who may be in need of an easy meal.
- d. work the fish to the boat as quickly as possible so it's not exhausted and vulnerable to predators when released.

5. A good release requires good handling of the fish once at the boat. The best technique is to...

- a. give the fish a quick, WWF-style head slam against the deck, because a stunned fish is a peaceful fish.
- b. lift heavy fish by the lower lip and swing them around a few times, stretching them out before taking a measurement.
- c. use well-textured gloves and a bucket of soapy water to wash off all that fish slime—it might be the only bath your fish ever gets.
- d. use rubber, knotless nets to preserve the fish's protective coating and support the weight of larger fish, keeping them horizontal and in the water if possible.

6. Specialized tools can speed up the release process and minimize its impact on a fish. The best tool for releasing fish is...

- a. a pair of channel locks—the big ones covered in hydraulic fluid you found in your toolbox.
- b. an extra-long fillet knife with a skinny blade, so you can reach down the fish's throat to cut the line and vent the stomach all at the same time.
- c. a modified air cannon (AKA: potato gun) that will launch the released fish far enough away from the boat that it won't get caught again.
- d. approved dehookers, fish grip devices and deep-water release tools that are appropriate for the size and species of fish you catch.

7. Fish caught in very deep water often suffer from barotrauma, or the rapid expansion of gasses inside the body. To help these fish, it's best to...

- a. let them lie on the deck for 5 to 10 minutes to see if they will acclimate all on their own.
- b. be proactive and roll the fish up tightly in a wet towel to squeeze out the excess gas.
- c. pierce anything that seems to be bulging out of place—stomach, eyes, the funny stuff around the anal vent.
- d. use a descending device, such as a weighted release clip or basket, to get the fish as close as possible to the depth it was caught.

Quiz Key

You guessed it. The answers are all “d”—as in, “Don’t be dumb” when it comes to catch and release. We asked our friend, Steve Theberge, who has worked with FishSmart and is a Riverside Technology/NOAA Affiliate, to help explain each of the Best Practices. They’re numbered below to correspond with the quiz questions.

- 1. Plan Ahead:** Be prepared to release your fish. Have your dehooker, fish gripper and recompression devices out and ready. If you want a picture, have your camera ready, too. The quicker the fish can be released, the better. Time is one of the more critical factors in a release. Out of the water, fish can’t breathe; they are also suffering from stress, which increases susceptibility to disease and infections. And in the South, temperature is also a major stressor, especially in the summer. Have everything out and know where it is so you can act fast. If you need to measure a fish, make sure you can do that quickly, too.
- 2. Avoidance:** The best plan is to try to avoid fish you cannot keep, especially when fishing in deep water. Some shallow water species have fairly high survival rates when released after being handled correctly, but this is not true for all species and particularly not true for fish with closed swim bladders caught in deep water. Move if you are catching too many fish you can’t keep, or change lures or bait or hook size to avoid these fish. Unfortunately, total avoidance is sometimes difficult to achieve.
- 3. Appropriate gear:** Use gear such as circle hooks or lures to avoid gut hooking fish, a major cause of mortality in released fish. Barbless hooks

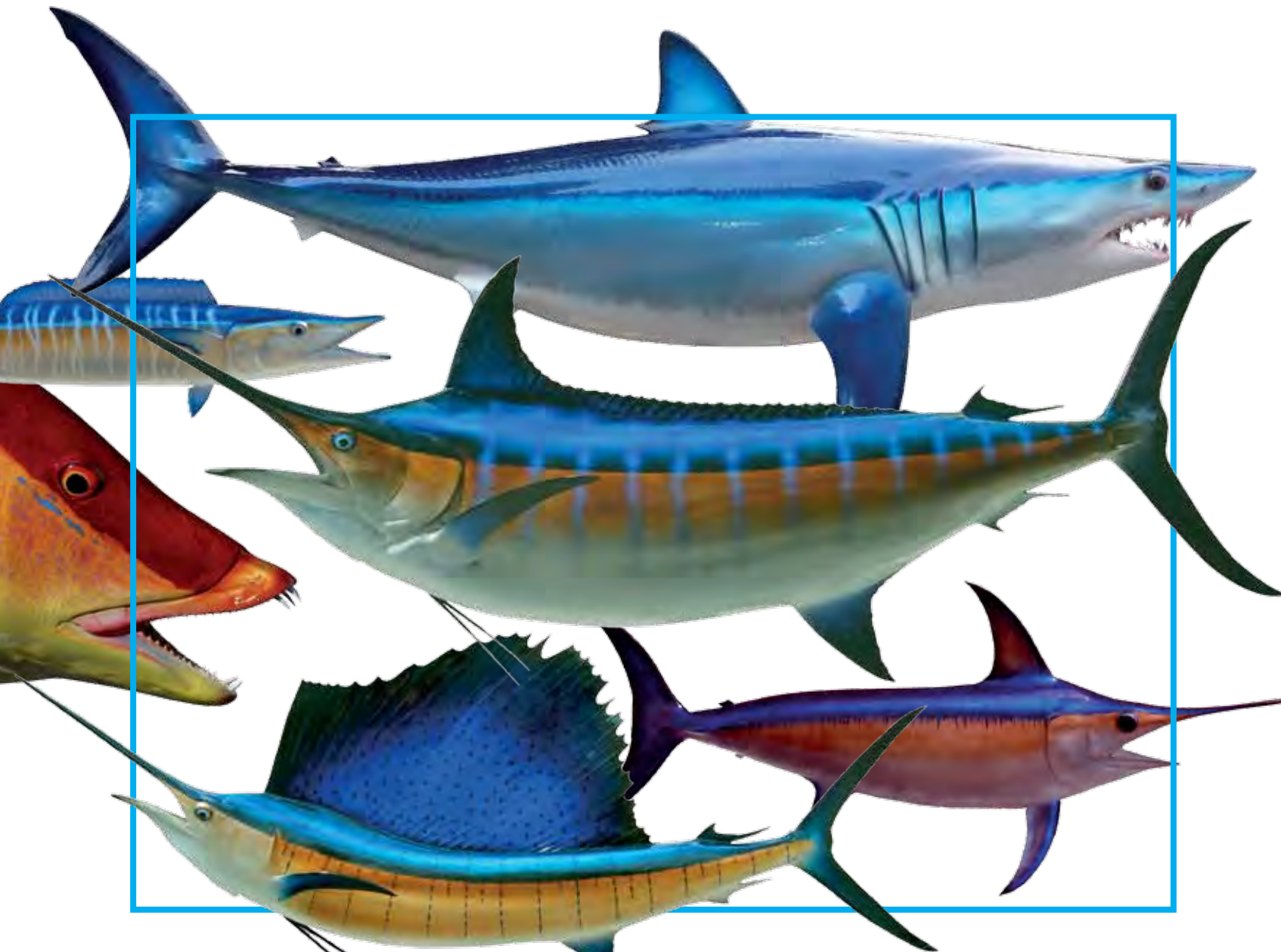
- 4. Landing fish:** Land the fish quickly, and do not play the fish until it is completely exhausted. Long battles cause quite a bit of stress, and raise stress hormone levels such as cortisol. This leaves a fish—as well as predators—susceptible to infections and disease. Predation is a major factor impacting the survival of released fish. In the Southeast and Gulf of Mexico, there are large numbers of aggressive predators such as barracuda, sharks, and bottlenose dolphins that are looking for weak fish to feed on.
- 5. Handling fish:** Handle the fish as little as possible. Removing slime or scales from a fish can result in infections and fungus growth. Try to support large fish by holding them horizontally. A rubberized mat on the floor can reduce damage if the fish is dropped and flops around. A rubberized landing net is easier on the fish’s scales and slime, and can also help control the fish and keep it from being dropped. The key is to be fast but gentle.

- 6. Releasing fish:** Release tools such as dehookers and fish grippers can help minimize handling and speed up the release of the fish. Find tools that fit your type of fishing and that work well for you!
- 7. Deep-water releases:** Fish with closed-swim bladders, such as grouper and snapper, cannot quickly release gasses from their system. This creates a survival issue when you have to release these fish due to

minimum size limits or seasonal closures. The depth at which barotrauma is a problem varies. Often, a quick observation of the fish at the surface can tell you a lot. If the fish is still fighting to get back down, a quick release is probably all you need, but if it is floating and not trying to dive, it probably needs help. Sometimes you do not have to get the fish very deep for it to get back down. The greatest expansion of gasses occurs in the last 32 ft. to the surface. But, it’s best to get as close to the bottom as possible. This also helps with predation. If a released fish can quickly get to the bottom, or rejoin the school of fish it came from, it is less of a target. Finally, in deep-water releases, find release tools and devices that work best for you and the conditions in which you usually fish. Although more research is needed, cages or milk crates (fish elevators) may be a better choice when predation is a major issue, but they are difficult to use in rough conditions or with strong currents. Some devices are better with certain size fish, and some require more expertise to be used effectively. And you can always design your own, but make sure the device is effective and does not damage the fish. For a list of popular devices, anglers can visit www.fishsmart.org.



A fish suffering from barotrauma (left) with a swollen stomach protruding from the mouth should be released at depth using a descending device, such as a basket system shown here. This helps the fish survive rapid pressure changes and avoid predation. Photos: Steve Theberge.



Keep & Release

You can keep your fish and release it, too, thanks to the modern art of fish mounts.

BY RAYMOND DOUGLAS

Some captains still kill fish under the guise of selling a mount, but this is not necessary. Modern fish mounts use forms that are then painted by artists, who use photos and measurements to customize each piece.

There are some good reasons for killing a fish. High on the list is consuming the fish as food, especially when the species in question is in relative abundance. However, no one should ever kill a fish to have it mounted. In times past, creating a fish mount was the same as many other forms of taxidermy, where the actual body of the animal was used to create the mount. Today, with very little exception, fish mounts are artistic recreations using composite materials. This is a good thing, both for creating a lasting and pleasing mount, and also for protecting sportfish through catch and release. But we are not too far removed from the old days, and many fish are still needlessly killed under the guise of having a mount created. How does this happen? To explain, I'll share a little of my own story.

My own interest in creating fish mounts had its beginnings when I was just 12 or 13 years old. I joined my dad on a charter boat and was thrilled to catch my first "deep sea" fish. I worked the fish to the boat, and as it neared exhaustion, the captain yelled down from the tower, "We haven't seen one like that in 10 years...you should have it mounted!" My father and I didn't know what to do. We had no idea of what it might cost. In that moment of hesitation, the fish was brought on board and clubbed to death. Rather than congratulate us, the captain and mate immediately put pressure on us to have it mounted—until we finally agreed. Little did I know then, but a 12-lb. kingfish is not generally considered the catch of a lifetime.

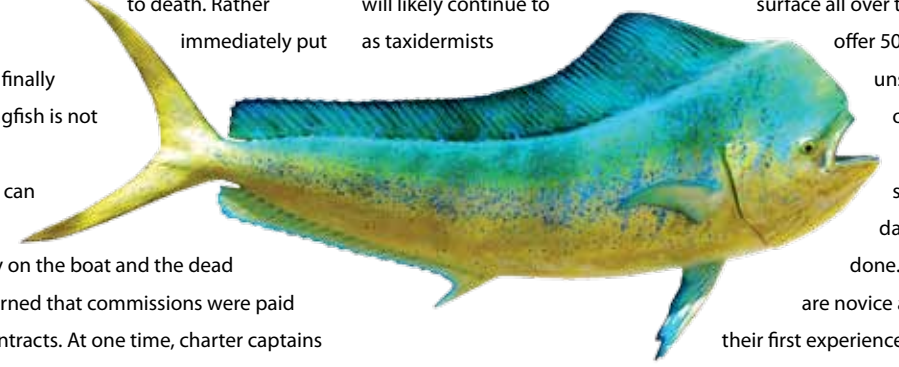
It's funny how combined life experiences can eventually lead you in a certain direction. Growing up, I often wondered about that day on the boat and the dead fish. Things made a lot more sense when I learned that commissions were paid to charter captains for securing mounting contracts. At one time, charter captains and mates would skin and salt the skins for the local taxidermist. Taxidermy companies would pay a well-earned agency fee to the captain or mate for providing this service, and for securing the order. Over time, taxidermy companies became more and more competitive and standard agent fees quickly increased to 50% of the mount price.

Unfortunately, this high bounty led to some unscrupulous selling techniques. Some years back, an investigation by the Florida attorney general exposed the surprisingly widespread use of deceptive sales techniques, sometimes referred to as "dock-slammng." There were reports of at least one charter company that would keep a frozen sailfish on board, and would slip the hooked dead fish into the water when no one was looking. When the line came tight, the angler believed that they had actually hooked the fish. This gave the crew a guaranteed opportunity to try and make the sale. Occasionally, a boat with a mountable fish on the line would mysteriously break down, and the rod would be passed to another boat where the angler was committed to having the fish mounted.

More often, anglers would feel confronted and even compelled to have their fish mounted by bringing it aboard and killing it. The customer was pressured to place an order for a mount so the fish was not "wasted." Even though taxidermy



companies no longer need any part of the actual fish, selling practices remained virtually unchanged, and so many of those trophy fish, including sailfish, tarpon and sharks just ended up in landfills. Amazingly, sadly, abusive selling techniques will likely continue to surface all over the world, as long as taxidermists offer 50% commissions to unscrupulous charter operators.



The scale is smaller now, but the damage is still being done. The most vulnerable are novice anglers, many out for their first experience catching saltwater

game fish. Years ago, I was one of them, and that experience helped motivate me to start King Sailfish Mounts two decades ago. Having a mount to remember a great fish and being conservation minded are not mutually exclusive. Today, all an angler has to do to obtain a mount of their once-in-a-lifetime catch is to measure the fish's overall length at boat side and let it go, being careful not to put themselves or the fish at risk for injury. For larger fish, it is okay to estimate the size. Photos taken from several angles can capture colors and special characteristics such as the shape and location of the spot on a redfish. Even an image that lacks good color can be used for anatomical accuracy. A long-lasting release mount can then be created to resemble the actual catch.

Thankfully, times have changed and sportsmen throughout the world are more in tune with sound conservation ethics. In South Florida, where I'm located, nearly every sailfish mount produced is based on a release. The market for release mounts is the fastest growing segment of the taxidermy industry, and more trophy gamefish are being released alive now than at any other time in recent history. That is a legacy I am proud to be a part of, and one I am committed to seeing continue. 🐟



The Youth Ocean Conservation Team: A Young Force of Nature

BY **DANNY THORNTON**

Clockwise from top left: students experience a touch tank at the National Aquarium. Members of the YOCT participate in a beach clean up. A kids version of a low key assembly line to make the portable fishing line storage bins. Sean Russell patrolling his beloved waters of Florida's West Coast.

My grandfather was a grumpy old man. “Kids these days have no ambition,” he’d say. Then he’d scowl and huff, “America is screwed!”

He never met Sean Russell. A recent graduate from the University of Florida, Russell is technically no longer a kid. But when he was, Russell had ambition, despite Paw Paw’s critique of American youth. And that drive has continued. When he was 16, Russell was a member of 4-H and an intern at Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota. While there, he noticed a serious problem and decided to try to fix it. “I saw the adverse effect discarded fishing line was having on dolphins and other marine life,” he said. “So I decided to try to do something about it.”

Although Florida has an expansive network of fishing line recycling bins on docks and piers across the state, they’re not always accessible to people on boats, kayaks or to people fishing in remote areas. So Russell started the “Stow It—Don’t Throw It” project in which he converted old tennis ball containers into receptacles for used fishing line. That was in 2008. “My goal the first year was to recruit other 4-H clubs and teach members the importance of proper disposal of fishing line,” Russell said in a recent interview. “We hoped to distribute 1,000 of the portable recycling bins. The idea really snowballed quickly and other organizations started getting involved like the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other school groups.”

They ended up assembling and distributing 1,500 personal-sized fishing line recycling bins in the first year. Now, they’ve created more than 12,000. Some of their partners have gotten creative. In Alaska, where they apparently have more coffee drinkers than tennis players, a school group adapted old coffee cans for their own Stow It—Don’t Throw It movement. Seeing his ideas resonate with like-minded kids led Sean to expand his reach and create the Youth Ocean Conservation Summit in 2011.

“The goal was to empower young people with the knowledge, skills and resources they need to successfully launch ocean conservation projects in their local communities,” Russell said.

The YOCS has become an annual event, with the most recent held in November at Russell’s home away from home, Mote Marine Laboratory. At the summit, scientists and conservationists teach kids about threats to the marine ecosystems. “Student participants also get to hear from other young people who are already doing incredible ocean conservation work,” Russell said. “And we walk them through the process of planning their own ocean conservation projects.”

Russell’s stream of consciousness spews forth kind of like a geyser at

Yellowstone Park. It takes a focused mind to keep up. I found myself wondering how his mouth could keep pace with his brain. Fortunately, we have technology like video and voice recorders to play back what he’s spouting out in rapid fire succession. But for Russell, his words are backed up by action. When he’s not mentoring youth or organizing summits, he’s outside picking up trash at a local park or unwinding fishing line from the branches of a mangrove.

“It’s easy to get overwhelmed by all of the issues such as ocean acidification, overfishing, plastics in the ocean and all of that,” Russell said. “Sometimes people don’t know where to start. That’s why we encourage kids to be action oriented and just start somewhere.”

It’s a mantra that has hit home with other young people. “I’d always been working for adults,” said 18-year-old Isabella Genta, who is a member of the Youth Ocean Conservation Team and helps coordinate outreach and social media for the program. “I loved the work Sean was doing, and he showed me how kids could take charge and make a difference. It inspired me to get involved.”

Sean and the Youth Ocean Conservation Team is now working to launch satellite summits across the country—summits which, according to Russell, are all “youth driven and action oriented.” To date, teens from the National Aquarium and Seattle Aquarium have recently hosted summits in Annapolis, MD, and Seattle, WA, respectively, and additional events are planned for 2015.

When I asked him if today’s youth are truly concerned about the marine environment—or apathetic, as my Grampy claimed—Russell was quick to reply.

“It’s a mixture,” he said. “But once young people are able to learn about conservation issues, and become empowered through our focus on action-solutions they can implement in their communities, many become change makers. They learn that they can take back their communities. That’s been really exciting. I never imagined it would get this big.”

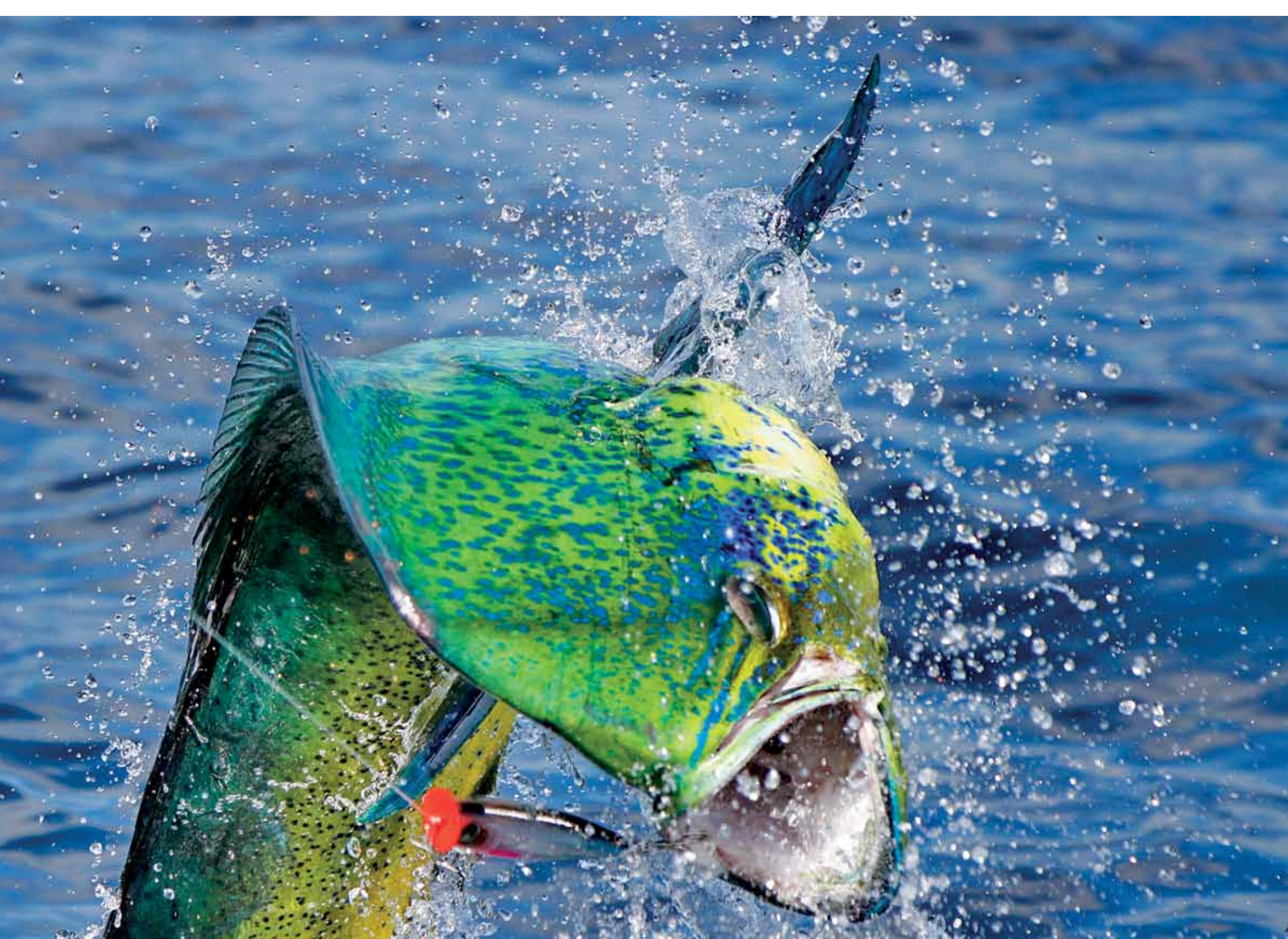
Don’t be surprised if it gets a whole lot bigger. 🐟





GUY HARVEY
a photo portfolio











GREEN POWER

at the Ft. Lauderdale Boat Show

Fall 2014 was already proving to be exceedingly wacky. Gas prices had dropped below \$3.00 a gallon. Mississippi State and Ole Miss were number one and two in college football rankings. And red snapper had once again become more controversial than Obama's military coffee salute.

November also brought on the Ft. Lauderdale Boat Show, where 100,000 fishing freaks gather each year to gawk at ridiculously expensive yachts and tinker with the newest innovations in marine gear. A cold front dropped temps in SoFlo down to 50 degrees—more fall weirdness—proving that global warming is a fickle lady. I braved the extreme cold with my Guy Harvey long sleeves and roamed the aisles with the beer-drinking masses to see if innovation in the marine industry still had a pulse.

More specifically, being that ocean conservation is a core tenant of the GH empire, I was looking for green products. That can be dicey, because most of the boats at these shows have four or five, 350 hp outboards hanging on the transom. I could almost hear the distant screams of dinosaurs being sucked from a greasy hole in the Texas dirt. So, I was seeking solar power, wind power, natural gases,



Bluegas Marine worked with boat maker, Intrepid, and engine giant, Mercury to build a Natural Gas powered 30-foot center console. The fuel eliminates fumes and odor, is 25% cleaner than gasoline and cost only \$1.50 a gallon. Storing natural gas takes 2-3 times more space than liquid gasoline. Boaters can switch from gasoline to natural gas at the push of a button without even cutting off the engines. Opposite: The radical new Evinrude E-TEC G2 has been completely redesigned on the inside as well as the outside.

composted vegetable parts, and medicinal herbs that may or may not be legal in Florida...yet.

My first day, I'd been set up by the exceedingly friendly mid-westerners at Evinrude (they're up in Wisconsin b'gosh) and their invitation to experience their newly revamped outboards. I grew up with an 85 hp 'rude on the back of a 17-ft. Boston Whaler, so I have a sentimental attachment, even though I've gone anti-American with four-stroke Yamahas in recent years. Nonetheless, I wanted to see what was up from an outboard company that used to rule the American marketplace.

The first thing I noticed is that Evinrude gave their design team absolutely zero restrictions. I mean, the wild new style is way different from any motor I've ever seen. It mixes a bit of the fantastic with a sprinkle of bizarre in an Iron Man kind of way. My wife's an artist, so I get it. Designers like to strut their stuff, and the Evinrude creative team doubled down. Personally, I think the new look is cool, but it's so far out, I'm sure there are some haters, too. Regardless of the form, the true test is the function. So the real question was, how would it perform?

To digress slightly, I have a buddy who is so patriotic he won't even buy rice... unless he's in New Orleans eating red beans, too. He drives a GMC truck, drinks

Budweiser beer and has a three-year-old Evinrude 115 E-TEC G2 on his 19-ft. Aquasport. When he bought the E-TEC G2, he took me for a spin to show off its torque. And I was impressed at how quickly his boat jumped out of the water. But it was still a two-stroke, said I. We agreed to disagree on whether his E-TEC G2 or my Yamy was cleanest.

Now, however, the new Evinrude has loads of green swagger while still delivering amazing launch power. According to the mid-westerners—who ooze whole-wheat honesty—the new motor produces 75% less emissions than any other motor on the market and is 15% more fuel efficient. That's big news in the tree-hugging universe and even more radical than the pimped-out cowling. It also has dynamic power steering with all of the hydraulics and such built into the engine assembly. That eliminates external pumps and tubing and streamlines the whole process. Ya kinda gotta see it to truly appreciate it.

I guess it doesn't matter if Evinrude's bold new motor is two-stroke or four as long as it's the cleanest gas-powered motor ever built. That's enough to get me waving the stars and stripes and giving Evinrude an all-American salute.

And just as Evinrude was making such ballsy claims, I found out that there was actually a cleaner engine on display at the Intrepid Boats booth not more than a





Greenline Hybrid yachts gather the power of the sun and run off of a hybrid electric/diesel power system. Going green does not mean sacrificing lux

half mile away. No, the Wisconsiners weren't fibbing, because this wasn't a typical engine. A company called BlueGas Marine is now converting outboards to burn natural gas so there are virtually no emissions in the air or water. I was thinking, *we've got a dadgum revolution on our hands*. Not only that, but the conversion is actually an addition because the newly fitted outboard (currently available on Mercurys and Yamahas) will run with either natural gas or regular ol' gasoline from the pump. Just the push of a button on the dashboard will change the fuel and you don't even have to slow down.

Because the world is overflowing with natural gas these days, the price has dropped to \$1.50 a gallon. Of course, there's that whole fracking issue and the environmental impact, but that's a discussion for another time. Right now, a boat owner's biggest challenge is fitting the large tubular tanks into the hull. For example, a 100-gal. natural gas tank takes up more than twice the space as conventional gasoline tanks, so retrofitting can be tricky. Best option is to build the boat with the tanks already mounted under the floor and it's no longer a problem.

After my eco-lightenment with Evinrude, Intrepid and BlueGas, I was craving a wheat germ sandwich with organic bean sprouts on a barley bun. Gluten free, of course. Unfortunately, boat show vendors aren't very health conscious, so I settled for a fried pork corndog and waffle fries. Mmm. Delicious. And the corndog stick is recyclable!

It was then that I stumbled upon the Nirvana of marine greenery: the Greenline Hybrid yacht. My brain cells went kinetic and I remembered touring a 33-ft. Greenline two years prior at the Miami Boat Show. This was a new 40-footer and they're also now offering a 48. These babies are green without sacrificing the extreme luxury that journalists like myself only get to experience at boat shows.

The Greenline has three fuel sources: the sun, diesel and electricity at the dock. A full battery pack will take you 20 miles at four knots using only the electric motor. You can charge 'em up with free electrons raining down from the sun or you can plug into shore power. Or, you can run this boat on conventional



diesel while charging the lithium batteries, which are seven times lighter and take up three times less space than typical lead batteries. The batteries can be recharged thousands of times and have a 10-year life expectancy. I was told that the Greenline can run on solar power continuously (during daylight) at 2-3 knots. That's cool.

If burning a lot of fuel is something you really enjoy, the Greenline can also be fitted with twin 380 hp diesels that will push her as fast as 23 knots.

In addition to the solar advantage, the company touts its super displacement hull design, lightweight infusion technology and hybrid drive system as to why these vessels are so efficient. They must be doing something right, because more

than 300 of the 33-footers have been sold in 28 countries since 2010, and they've won dozens of environmental awards.

Perhaps most importantly, the Greenline Hybrid yachts are backed by Slovenian mega-corporation Seaway that builds everything from windmill turbines to mega-yachts. So this is no hippie, fly-by-night operation. If I have my way, the next Guy Harvey boat will be a Greenline Hybrid!

I'm sure there were other outstanding marine products that are aimed at reducing, recycling and reusing. But even after four days of braving the crowds, I was not able to see everything. So, I had no choice but to stock up on a few more corndogs and hit the road in my lovely, sky blue Prius at 50 mpg! 🐦

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Catching a typically beastly billfish near Panama. Photo: Guy Harvey.

DOCK
BUZZBY EDITOR
NICK HONACHEFSKYREGIONALIZED REGS
Beneficial or Busted?

Summer flounder are one of the most economically viable and recreationally important fishes along the northeast and mid-Atlantic coast. Historically, summer flounder regulations have been managed on a state-by-state basis, with each state implementing its laws based on the given scientific data of the federal agency, the National Marine Fisheries Services. But in March 2014, the Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board made a change away from state-based management and approved regional management measures that lump several states together. There are two regions: (1) Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, with a 16-in. minimum size, four fish bag limit, and a year-round season; and (2) Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, with an 18-in. minimum size, five fish bag limit, and 128-day open season. The question yet to be answered is if this type of regionalized management is going to be good for fish stocks and good for the economies of the states involved.

DIVIDING STATES

One issue to examine is that states that are now lumped together can have very different track records when it comes to management. States such as New Jersey have worked hard implementing conservation efforts over the last decade, moving summer flounder minimum size from 16 in. up to 18.5 in. However, when things started to improve, anglers were rewarded with a move back down to a 17.5-in. minimum size last year. Conversely, New York continually exceeded its quota year after year, and its anglers had to suffer with near-ridiculous minimum size limits of 21 in. in recent years. Connecticut, as well, had an 18.5-in. minimum size for the same reason. Now, under regionalization, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey all share the same regulations—an 18-in. minimum size. In this

scenario, New York and Connecticut anglers seem to benefit, but those in Jersey suffer, at least in the short run. This has created some animosity.

Some quotes regarding the sentiment of New Jersey residents on chat boards: "I've tried to cooperate, but this has now gone too far. This year on my boat, keep whatever you want, I'll be flying the pirate flag. Can't believe I'll be an outlaw." And from Adam Nowalsky, New Jersey representative of the Recreational Fishing Alliance, "Individual states have lost their autonomy to go ahead and select regulations that are most beneficial to that state's anglers, and that loss of autonomy is extremely disconcerting. It's especially tough," he added, "considering all these states have done to constrain harvests and manage the resource."

Obviously, Jersey anglers want to keep the 17.5-in. minimum they earned and are now going back to an 18-in. limit. A half inch may not seem like much to those who don't understand the fluke industry, but it makes a heck of a lot of difference for the charter and headboats that try to make a living while continually throwing back "last year's keepers."

Another issue for New Jersey anglers and fishing businesses is their neighbor to the south. Jersey shares Delaware Bay with Delaware, a state where the regulations are a 16-in. minimum and an all-year open season. No doubt, South Jersey businesses will suffer as Delaware anglers will be pounding the bay basically spring through fall, taking loads of fluke, leaving meager numbers for Jersey anglers in their 128-day summer season.

Regionalization may work economically in the sense that if it's ceteris paribus across the board for a region, then the businesses shouldn't suffer with people running out of state to take advantage of more liberal regulations next door.

The answer, in my opinion, is that if you are going to regionalize, then make it a blanket law for the entire east coast, so everybody pays into the system equally. An example of this is already in place. Currently, regionalization regarding the striped bass stocks on the East Coast is tentatively passed for one fish at a 28-in. minimum, or an alternate measure that equals a 25% reduction in harvest. This directive from the federal level allows states to develop their own state-specific measures so long as any combination of size and bag still achieves a 25% reduction in harvest. In this scenario, everybody is playing by the basic same set of rules so no one state is suffering more than another. This seems to be a better approach.

WILL IT WORK?

The bigger question is, will regionalization produce healthy fish stocks? To answer this, it helps to remember that not all species have the same migration patterns. Fluke run east to the continental shelf to winter and then move east into the back bays to spawn, and basically, the same body of fish keeps moving in and out of a single state's waters. Here, regionalization may end up with states overfishing quotas in areas like New York and Connecticut, where larger fluke are generally found. This could add poundage to the quota, causing a future reduction that Jersey anglers will have to live with because they are in the same region. More importantly, more large breeding fish could be taken out of the equation in New York and Connecticut and that could end up detrimental to the stocks as a whole.

Conversely, striped bass are a north-to-south coastal migratory species. In

this case, all the states share in the same fishery as they migrate north to south and vice versa, so generally, the same fish that a New Jersey angler fishes for in the spring, the Connecticut angler fishes for in the summer and the Virginia angler fishes for during the winter. In this instance, regionalization probably works well, as all the states are sharing and fishing from the same stock. Everybody's paying an equal price. Managed with this coast-wide equality approach, every state is dipping into the same pool of striped bass stocks, and implementing the same 25% reduction of catch, meaning, in theory, the fishery should recover and bounce back, benefitting both the species and the economies of each state.

Like any management technique, regionalization only works if proper calculating methods are in place, and reliable data collection efforts are implemented. On the East Coast, I believe it can be a successful way to manage certain stocks, like striped bass, that have a north-to-south migration pattern. For east-to-west migrating fish, like summer flounder, regionalization may end up harming fish stocks by hammering big breeder fish in one area, and it may do harm economically to states that share borders with other, more liberal regions. One thing is sure, the tug-of-war between state regulation and regionalized regulation isn't going away. As the East Coast moves toward grouping states together, other regions, like the Gulf Coast, are pushing for more individual state control for species like red snapper. In the end, I hope both the fish and the fisherman get a win. 🐟

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Serious Fun

Capt. Bouncer Smith

BY CA STAFF

Captain Bouncer Smith is a veteran of the South Florida fishing scene, running boats since 1968 and chartering his own rig since 1976. Earlier this year he was inducted into IGFA's "Legendary Captains and Crews" and he has won a slew of tournament prizes. When he's not fishing, Bouncer is often promoting or teaching fishing through his radio shows, magazine articles and event appearances. He has a reputation for being absolutely serious about three things: conservation, catching fish and having a good time. And yes, his initials do allow us to call him "Capt. B.S."



Photo: Capt. Bouncer Smith.

CA: How many days a year do you spend on the water, and do you specialize in a certain type of fishing?

BS: I fish almost 400 trips a year. About 300 all-day trips and 100 evening 4-hour trips. Our trips are mostly live baiting the edge for sailfish, mahi, tuna, kingfish and assorted surprises. Our evening trips are tarpon or snook. We also do a lot of swordfish charters. These fish run 75 to 500 lbs. The best time is May, June, September and October. We specialize in filling people's dreams or bucket list. Sailfish, swordfish and tarpon are tops.

CA: What advice would you give captains prepping for a billfish tournament?

BS: Use the methods you are most comfortable with and track the action via your fishing and your contacts' fishing the preceding week. Keep track of locations including depth, water qualities and current. Bait selection is also very important, and you need to stockpile the best of baits whether live, dead or artificial. Penned live baits can be stronger than fresh caught baits.

Rigging a good supply of trolling baits in advance allows for better rest the night before and more attention to baits in the water while fishing.

CA: We know you are superstitious about bananas. Can you explain?

BS: Let's just say I could write a book on bad things that happen when bananas are on a fishing trip.

CA: In your opinion, what is the most improved South Florida fishery? Conversely, what species are you most concerned about?

BS: Sailfish and snook are doing great. Mutton snapper are in total collapse. They need a closed season during spawning times. I think Marine Reserve Areas would do wonders for the population of mature reef species of all kinds. These full grown specimens would provide for better spawning and larger gene properties.

CA: If you had to settle for one port, rod and one bait for the rest of your life, what would they be?

BS: Government Cut, a 12- to 20-lb. rod, Penn spinner full of 20 lb. line and live herring. This set up can catch everything that swims and eats fish.

CA: What do you wish other anglers would remember or do when they are on the water?

BS: Secure all trash so plastic bags don't blow out

when they are running, and only harvest what they will eat soon and release the rest with respect and proper care.

CA: What's the craziest thing a customer has ever done on your boat?

BS: One time, Dixie Burns had all of us marching around the boat singing Mickey Mouse Club songs to attract sailfish (it worked) while in Bimini. On another occasion, Dr. Marty Arostegui said he was going to catch a swordfish on fly. He caught it from a dead boat on a fly he tied, leader he rigged and, of course, with properly angling. I just watched and picked the spot. This was the most amazing of all angling achievements.

CA: Off the water, what's your favorite pastime?

BS: First, my sister's grandchildren. Second, it's promoting the future of good recreational fishing through seminars and other gatherings.

CA: How did you acquire your unusual nickname?

BS: It was in sixth grade recess. The class was playing volleyball. I am no good at sports. Ball comes to me and rolls across the basketball court. As I dribble it back, Tom Hobbs hollered, "Hey, Bouncer, quit bouncing the ball around." It stuck. Same school through high school and it was same peers every year. Bouncer was locked in. 🍌



Photo: Capt. Bouncer Smith.



GET ON THE EFFISH

All-in-one GPS/fishfinder units pack a big punch at a great price.

GEARHEADS:

Get on the Fish BY FRED GARTH

By Jeff Dennis
GHM Insider

Diving into the world of marine electronics can be overwhelming, but the core of any system is the ability to navigate to the fishing grounds and then find out what's under the boat once you get there. Whether shopping for a modest-size sportfisher or a smaller run-and-gun center console, all-in-one units that combine GPS and fishfinder capabilities are a great starting point for the majority of boats. They're compact, powerful, and some systems are expandable to include radar or autopilot capabilities.

The only limitations when it comes to purchasing a system seems to be your imagination and, of course, your budget. Models range from portable, handheld devices to large, touch screen, multifunction displays; but buyers can filter out some of the clutter by first choosing a price range. Manufacturers typically design models to fit different price categories anyway, so this keeps you fishing in the right school size for your needs.


Current trends in features for GPS/fishfinder models include the wider availability and lower price of touch screen displays. However, the scuttlebutt is to test drive one before

purchasing. Touch screens have their pluses, but some can be heat sensitive, which is a detractor for many applications in smaller, open boats. Also, some anglers find they have more control with traditional components that have switches and dials that offer tactile feedback and a secure spot to rest a fingertip while rocking around in a small boat.

Another trend is increased map coverage. Mapping used to include having different chips on hand or downloading new charts when traveling out of your home region. Now most units come with mapping that covers much larger areas, for example the entire East Coast. Imagine boating down to

the Bahamas and finding out that your electronics unit already has an eye-popping map of the fishing grounds.

When you do get ready to purchase, remember that your research needs to be very timely. Just like the array of TVs at your local Best Buy, the world of marine electronics is changing all the time. Console layouts and boat design are driven by innovations like system integration and wireless transducers. Older units are discontinued and newer designs pop up faster than you can say "software update." So if it's been a while since you did your homework, check out the latest offerings before pulling the trigger.



One final word: For ease of integration, and general preservation of sanity, many anglers pick a brand they like and stick to it, adding components or doing upgrades with a single manufacturer. This can simplify things, but the mix-and-match approach can work well, too. Don't be afraid to check out competing brands. You might find just the mix of features you want at a price you're happy to pay. Following is a selection of some of the most popular all-in-one units, ranging from \$500 to \$1,500. 

All-in-one electronic units save space on small boats, but can still offer big features.



Simrad NSS7 evo2

- 7-in. TouchSensible screen and keypad with rotary knob
- HEROiC software creates ease of use for consolidated Nav page display
- Provides full autopilot integration

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 www.simrad-yachting.com



Garmin GPSMAP 741xs

- 7-in. pinch-to-zoom touchscreen
- 60% more processing power than previous 700 Series
- HD-ID™ sonar with CHIRP technology better depicts fish at different depths

 \$1,100
 www.garmin.com

Raymarine Dragonfly Sonar/GPS

- 5.7-in. LED backlit screen
- ClearPulse CHIRP and DownVision sonar
- Smaller size and affordability are a good fit for inshore boats

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www.Raymarine.com



Lowrance Elite 5 CHIRP Basemap

- 5-in. SolarMax touchscreen
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Humminbird 999ci HD SI Combo

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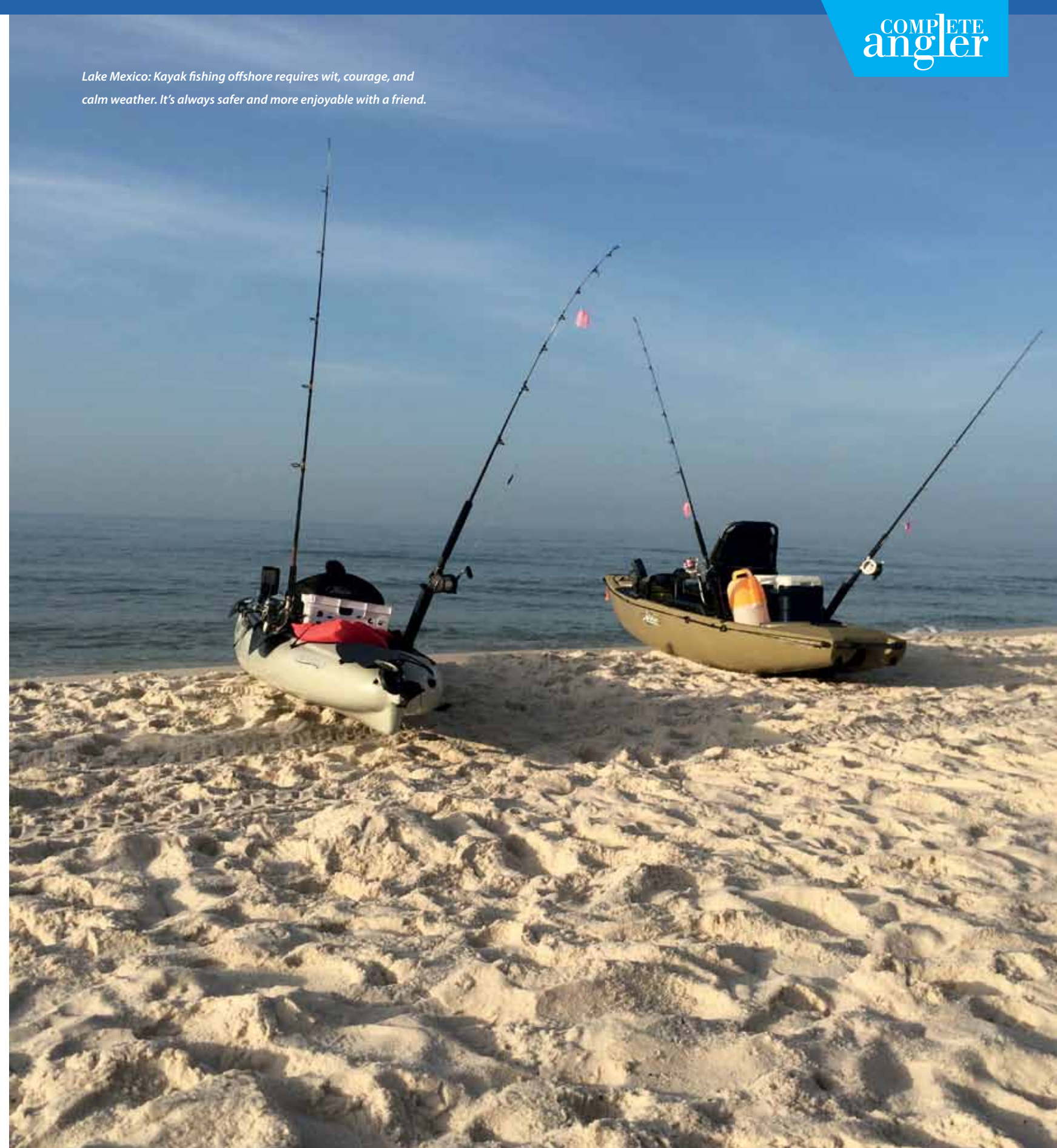
Offshore kayak fishing requires a little gear, and a little nerve.

BY **THOMAS DERBES**

In the world of fishing and boating, the trend always seems to be about being bigger and faster, but what if I told you that one of the biggest trends is all about being smaller? In the last decade, kayak fishing has become all the rage. I'm not sure how it really got started, but I know what got me hooked. It's cheap. When your diet regularly includes ramen noodles (I'm a semi-starving college student), there's not a lot in the budget for fueling up the ol' center console. But in my kayak, I can fish inshore and offshore. I can stalk big bull reds, boss red snapper, troll for king mackerel and even hunt sailfish, all for the cost of bait.

Better yet, kayak fishing is hard-core fishing—something like hand-to-hand combat—and that's probably why it has attracted anglers of all income levels. (There's more than one sportfishing mega yacht out there with a special berth for the owners' yak.) One thing all kayak anglers know is that being down on the water in such a small craft changes the fishing experience. On a larger boat, you can use the gunwale as leverage to fight a big fish, but in a kayak, you are one with the ocean. The first fish I caught bottom fishing offshore was a 19-in. red snapper, but if you had asked me during the fight, I would have said it was a 50-lb. gag grouper. I had never experienced a battle like that before and I was instantly hooked.

Lake Mexico: Kayak fishing offshore requires wit, courage, and calm weather. It's always safer and more enjoyable with a friend.



I bought my first kayak four years ago for \$250. It was a cheap, paddle kayak, and I started fishing inshore for reds and speckled trout around Lynn Haven, Florida. I quickly fell in love with the versatility, portability and virtual silence of the kayak. I loved being able to cruise over a school of reds and not spook a single fish. The Florida Panhandle has awesome inshore fishing, but I soon discovered that on the right days, you could paddle out to near-shore reefs and also troll for big king mackerel. Fast forward three years and I am still a broke college student (getting closer to graduation, Ma! I promise!), but now I've upgraded to a 2013 Hobie ProAngler 12.

The ProAngler is made for fishing from the ground up. Instead of a paddle, Hobie has integrated their Mirage pedal drive system so I can propel the yak with my legs and keep both hands free for fishing. This is not only a major advantage while I'm fishing, but also getting to the fishing hole. I can travel faster and a lot farther than paddlers simple because legs are stronger than arms and the pedal system is more efficient than a paddle.

Another generic advantage of yak fishing is that I don't need an expensive slip at a marina, a waterfront home with a boatlift or a pricey trailer. I'm lucky enough to have a wonderful girlfriend with a big garage where she lets me store my yak, as long as I do the dishes every once in a while and don't leave the toilet seat up.

OFFSHORE 101

When I purchased my Hobie ProAngler 12, I took it to the beach for its first taste of saltwater. The waves were knee-high with a long period, so I launched the Hobie off the beach and took to the water. I made it past the first trough, hit my first swell and flipped over. Upset and wet, I got back on the horse and flipped four more times. Suffice it to say, getting comfortable in bouncy conditions is a must if you're going to head offshore. The best teacher is experience, so find a fairly calm day to practice how to cruise in your new ride.

When it's time to fish, there are some general rules to follow, as well. Always make a float plan, go with a friend, and keep a constant eye on the weather and surf. And don't go offshore if there is any

Top: Watch out below! You never know what you will catch when you drop your bait down, especially while kayak fishing. Middle: The Mirage Drive on the Hobie Kayaks makes it much easier to troll on your way to your favorite spot. You might pick up a cruising king or even an elusive sailfish. Bottom: Fish on! Fishing with a buddy makes it safer, but it also makes it easier to land fish.



Unlike boats, kayaks can fit in any garage, even the ones full of furniture. The author's girlfriend allows him to keep his kayak in her garage as long as he brings back fresh fish (and cooks it, too)

uncertainty in the weather. My rule of thumb is that it's fishable if the swell is less than knee-high and the winds are less than 15 mph, but your comfort level may be different. Of course, always wear a life preserver, and bring lots of water and liquids. You do not want to run the risk of dehydration, heat exhaustion or heat stroke several miles from shore. Since you can buy a good waterproof VHS radio for around \$100, that's a no-brainer.

When targeting offshore fish, make sure you have the gear to handle the big boys. My tackle consists of two spinning reels with short, stiff rods and a conventional reel with a trolling rod. If there's one thing I've learned about fishing offshore, it's that you never know what you will run into. For bottom fish, I use one of my spinning reels with 30-lb. Braid, and when trolling for kings and pelagics, I use the conventional set-up with 100 yd. of 30-lb. fluorocarbon attached to 250 yd. of monofilament backing.

When I launch my kayak, I immediately take out my trolling rod, hook up a cigar minnow to a duster rig and start trolling. Kings, cobia, and even sailfish can be found within 150 yd. of the beach in our area, and most powerboats tend not to fish this zone, giving the kayak angler an advantage.

Trolling on your way out can also help locate new fishing spots that you

haven't previously marked. For example, I was trolling out to 65 ft. of water with a friend of mine when my deep trolling rod went off. After a quick battle, up pops a red snapper. Curious, we traced our path backward and came across a huge structure with red snapper and triggerfish coming way up in the water column. Had I not been trolling, we might not have found our new honey hole.


When trolling for pelagics, there are many different ways to approach it depending upon your target species. King mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and mahi-mahi can be caught on duster rigs with treble hooks and a live or dead cigar minnow. Sailfish are a little trickier and require some patience when targeting. For sailfish, a single circle hook rig attached to 2 ft. of 38-lb. wire and 8 ft. of 40-lb. fluorocarbon with a hardtail or cigar minnow is preferred. With the single hook rig, you will have many hit and runs by kings and Spanish, but persistence and patience can pay off.

Bottom fishing off a kayak has a special place in my heart. When bottom fishing, there are two different rigs you can use. (Remember, some places require the use of circle hooks when fishing for reef fish, so stay up to date with current regulations.) My favorite is the knocker rig. This rig consists of a 6- to 10-ft. leader of 40-lb. fluorocarbon attached to a swivel. A weight is added to the leader and a

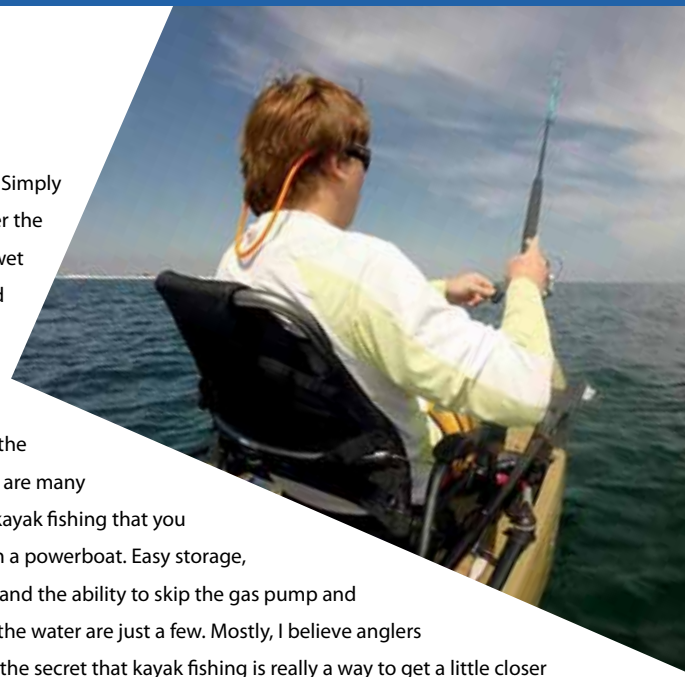
circle hook is attached to the bottom. This is excellent when fishing over a heavily structured area. Another favorite rig is the fish finder rig. This consists of a weight attached to a main line with a swivel attached to 2-3 ft. of 40 lb. fluorocarbon leader and a circle hook. This is effective against fish that are timid of a short leader, and also allows you to "feel the bite" as it happens.

Once you're catching fish, you'll need a plan for getting them back to shore or making a safe release. Before keeping any fish, make sure you are up to date with the changing regulations and required releasing equipment in your area. If you catch a fish that is too small or out of season, quickly snap a picture, unhook it and say "goodbye" while you pray to see him again once he's bigger. Storing a fish on a kayak can be challenging, but this is where being prepared is critical. If you have some extra money and are willing to spend it on a fish cooler bag, do it. These bags can hold everything from a 12-in. black snapper to a 42-in. king. I've found out that frozen water bottles work great as ice in your bag and in your coolers. For those of you like me, you have one cooler that can hold your beverages and snacks and maybe your limit of snapper. But what if a 50-lb. cobia comes along and joins the party? Bringing a dirty towel with you can help store the fish until

you reach shore. Simply lay the towel over the fish and keep it wet (and make a mad dash for land).

Whether you prefer the big water or the backwater, there are many positives about kayak fishing that you cannot have with a powerboat. Easy storage, extreme stealth, and the ability to skip the gas pump and head straight to the water are just a few. Mostly, I believe anglers have discovered the secret that kayak fishing is really a way to get a little closer to the action we all crave. Just remember to always be prepared, bring water, check the weather, make a float plan and, above all, make sure your girlfriend hasn't changed the locks. 

Fishing during the spring Cobia run is tough on a kayak, but it can be done. Dragging a plastic eel and casting Cobia jigs at passing sea turtles is one of the many techniques used by kayak fishermen. Below: Trigger Happy! Triggerfish and Red Snapper are the main targets for offshore kayak fishermen along the Florida Panhandle. Just make sure to watch your fingers and toes when you put a fish on the deck!



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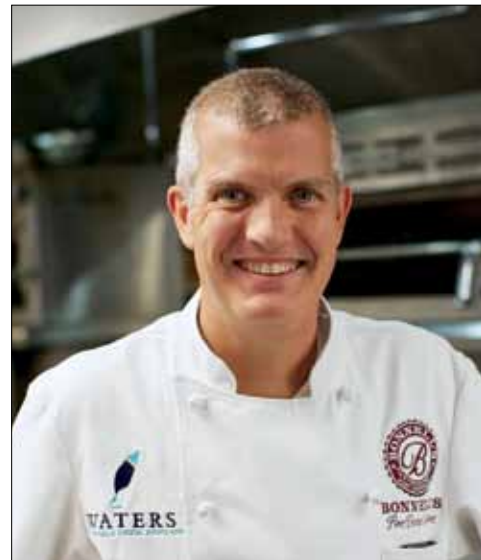
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CATCH & COOK

BY **GHM STAFF**

Chef Jon Bonnell is the owner of the renowned Bonnell's Fine Texas Cuisine in Fort Worth. Known for his inspired flavors and fresh, inventive cuisine, he is also an avowed fisherman, hunting everything from freshwater trout to migrating tarpon with a rod. His dual passions for fishing and food began at a young age when he started preparing his own catch. Today, he also has a passion for teaching others to do the same.



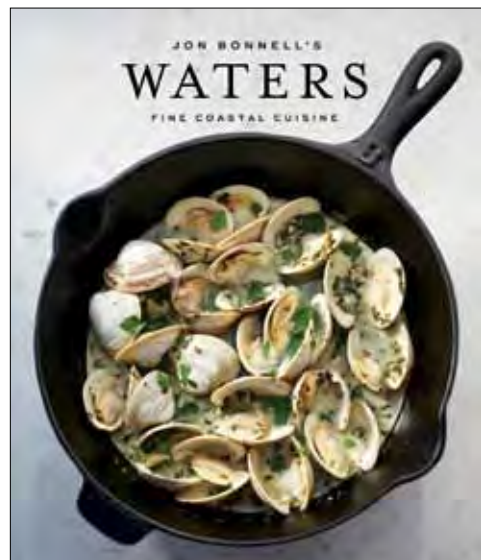
John Bonnell | Chef, Bonnell's Fine Texas Cuisine

"Through all of my years in teaching cooking, I've found that almost everyone I come across is afraid to cook fish, for one reason or another. People can fire up the grill and pull off a decent steak with their eyes closed, but hand them a snapper, and some primitive fear wells up inside them at the thought of trying to fillet it, much less cook it."

One of Bonnell's answers to this is writing cookbooks. His latest, *Jon Bonnell's Waters*, reflects the diversity of both his home state waters and his own palate. Texas fishing includes opportunities for speckled trout and redfish inshore, and snapper to wahoo offshore, and Chef Bonnell seems to have a recipe for every major species of fish and shellfish in between. However, regardless of the protein in question, he insists on both sustainability and freshness.

"I'm a sport-fisherman, a chef, multiple-restaurant owner, outdoorsman and conservationist, so this subject is close to my heart," says Bonnell. "In all of my dealings with fishermen, various seafood purveyors and suppliers across the country, my mission has always been the same: find the highest quality and freshest seafood for my customers while doing my best to support American fishermen and protect wild fisheries." 🐟

Jon Bonnell's Waters, Gibbs Smith, \$35.00, Hardcover.



pureed together until smooth)
 2 T chopped fresh parsley
 3 T chopped fresh thyme
 3 T chopped fresh oregano
 Salt, optional

For the seafood:

12 oz redfish fillet, large dice
 1 lb shrimp, 21–25 count, peeled and deveined
 1 lb lump crabmeat (picked through for shell pieces)
 (Other options: snapper, grouper, sheepshead, triggerfish, cobia or oysters—whatever is fresh)

In a large soup pot, sauté the onion, peppers, celery, carrots and garlic in olive oil until soft. Deglaze with the white wine and reduce by half. Add the chopped tomatoes, canned tomatoes and clam juice, and simmer together for 15 minutes. Finish the base by adding the chipotle puree and fresh herbs. Salt as needed. Let simmer 3–4 minutes; gently

add in the seafood and give one gentle stir. Simmer lightly, covered, for 10–12 minutes, until all fish is cooked through, then taste for seasonings one last time. Do not over stir the soup or the crab pieces and fish will break apart.

Gulf Seafood Stew

Serves 10–12

For the base:

1 white onion, small dice
 1 poblano pepper, small dice
 1 jalapeño pepper, small dice (seeds optional)
 1 red bell pepper, small dice
 3 ribs celery, small dice
 1/2 C diced carrot
 5 cloves garlic, minced
 2 T olive oil
 1-1/2 C white wine
 10 Roma tomatoes, finely diced (to make 2-1/2 C)
 2 (14-1/2 oz) cans diced tomatoes
 24 oz clam juice
 2 t chipotle puree (canned chipotles in adobo)

1 clove garlic, minced
 1 T capers, drained
 1/2 C dry white wine
 1 T butter
 1/2 t chopped fresh tarragon
 1/2 t chopped fresh oregano
 Pinch of sea salt
 Pinch of freshly ground black pepper

To clean the baby artichokes, snap off the rough, dark green outer leaves by hand until you reach the tender, yellow leaves. Cut off the top of the artichokes about 1/2 in. from the tips of the leaves in a straight line across the leaves. Cut off the stem as well. Slice the artichokes into halves or quarters then place immediately in a small bowl of cold water with half of the lemon juice. This will help keep the artichokes from turning brown as you clean each one. Once finished, steam or boil the artichokes for 15 minutes, or until tender, then remove and reserve for later.

Season the mahi fillets well on both sides with Waters Bay Blend or your favorite seafood seasoning.

Seared Mahi with Artichokes and Capers

Serves 2

6 fresh baby artichokes or 1 (14 oz) can baby artichokes, quartered
 Juice of 1 lemon, divided
 2 (6- to 8-oz) fillets of mahi, boneless and skinless
 1/2 t Waters Bay Blend
 1 t canola oil





Heat a large, nonstick, ovenproof pan, then add in the oil and roll it around quickly to coat the bottom. Add the mahi and sear it on high heat. Brown the first side well, (approx. 2 minutes) before turning over. If the fillets are somewhat thin, they can be finished in the pan, but if they are too thick, finish cooking them in a 375° oven until done in the center. When the fillets reach an internal temperature of 140°, tested with a meat thermometer, remove the pan from the oven and transfer the fillets to warm plates while the sauce is being prepared.

In the same pan in which the mahi was cooked, quickly sauté the artichokes, garlic and capers for about 1 minute on high. Deglaze the pan with white wine and add the remaining lemon juice. Reduce until the pan is almost dry, and then turn the heat down to low and add the butter and herbs. Swirl the pan constantly until the butter is incorporated, then season with salt and pepper. Pour sauce over the mahi fillets and serve.

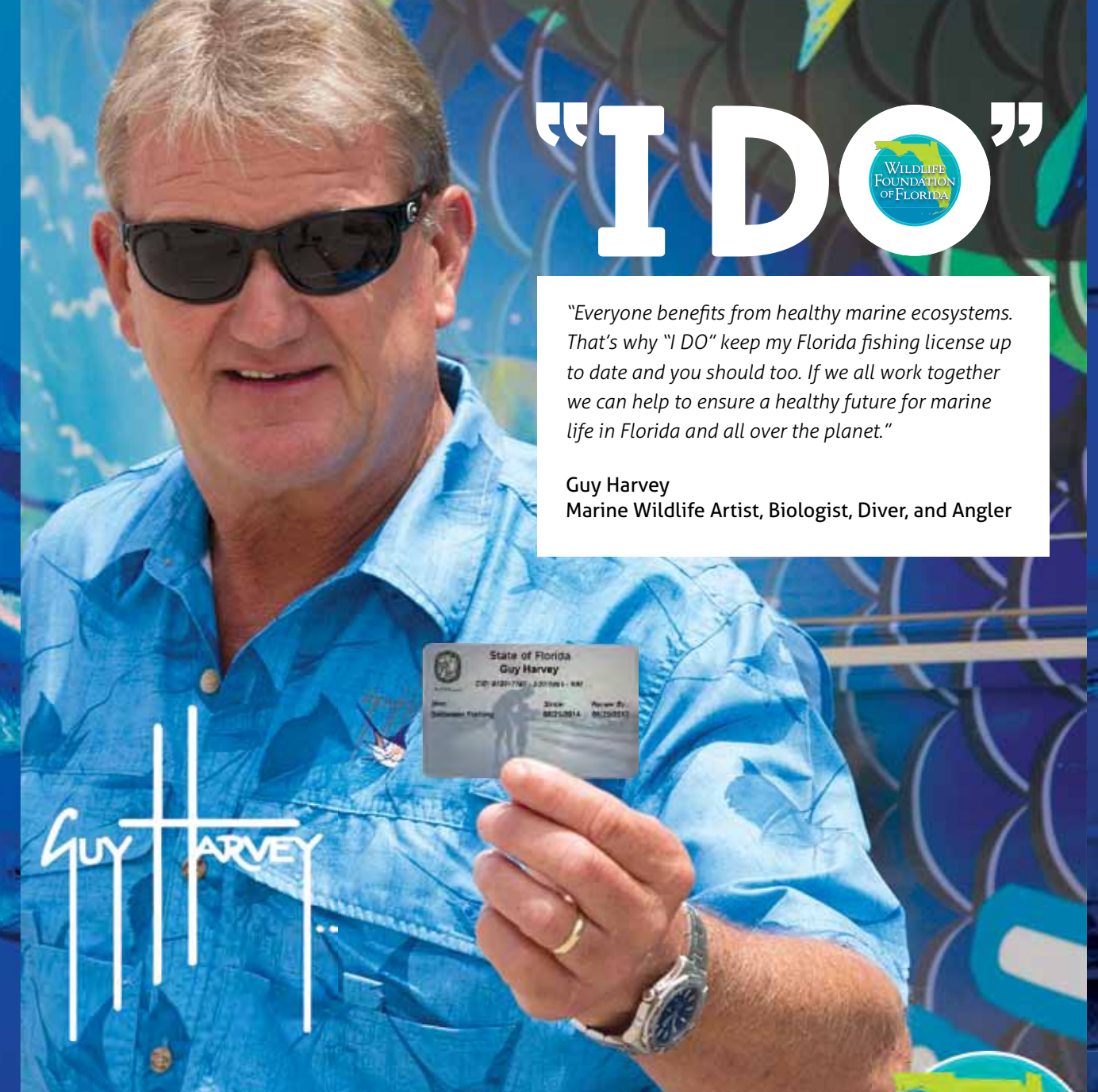
Lobster Mac and Cheese

Serves 8

- 2 small lobsters (1 lb each) OR
- 1 large lobster (2-1/2 lbs)
- 1 T butter
- 1 T all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 C half-and-half
- Sea salt
- Ground white pepper
- 2 oz grated Chihuahua cheese
- 1 (5.2-oz) box Boursin Garlic and Fine Herbs cheese
- 4 C cooked macaroni elbows
- 2 sprigs fresh tarragon, leaves chopped
- 3-4 sprigs fresh dill, fronds chopped
- 1 Roma tomato, seeded and diced

Steam or boil the lobsters (the seafood counter will usually do this for you, if you like) until done, then chill. Remove the meat from the tails, legs and claws and cut into large chunks. Set aside.

In a large saucepot, add the butter and flour and cook, stirring until a light roux has formed. Do not brown, but rather cook just until the flour is bubbling and begins to smell like sourdough toast. Add the half-and-half and bring to a simmer while whisking. Season to taste with salt and white pepper. Once the mixture has simmered for 2 minutes, add the cheeses and cook until melted. Then add the lobster meat, macaroni, herbs and diced tomato. Fold together until all ingredients are incorporated and serve immediately.



“I DO”



“Everyone benefits from healthy marine ecosystems. That’s why “I DO” keep my Florida fishing license up to date and you should too. If we all work together we can help to ensure a healthy future for marine life in Florida and all over the planet.”

Guy Harvey
Marine Wildlife Artist, Biologist, Diver, and Angler

GUY HARVEY



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FRED GARTH

For the past 25 years, Fred D. Garth's articles have appeared in numerous books, magazines and newspapers around the world.

Read his blog at: GuyHarveyMagazine.com.

As a writer—and believe it or not, that's what I want to be when I grow up—it always makes me happy when readers compliment my articles. Trust me, those of us who write stories, create art, design brochures and so forth, have sensitive egos. So, positive reinforcement is always welcomed. In other words, feel free to call or email me if you like something I write. If you don't, just keep that crap to yourself.

Here, in the final pages of the magazine, I like to keep a light mood and tell funny fishing stories, like when a certain CEO of a major fishing apparel company (who will remain unnamed) got rolled over three times in his kayak by a breaking wave and lost all of his fishing gear as I stood on the beach practically wetting my pants. Then again, things are not always fun and games. When the BP spill hit four years ago, my light-hearted nature kinda got swept away by the giant gush of oil.

In the years since, I've written a lot about the oil spill because I lived it. As a 20-year resident of Perdido Key, we were the first beach in Florida to get oiled because we're located at the far northwestern tip of the state. (Trivial sidenote: clever marketers are now calling Florida's Panhandle the "Upside of Florida"). Anyway, during the spill, our community panicked. Tourism vanished and we were freaked out about eating seafood, much less swimming. There's still uncertainty about the long-term effects. However, by most estimations, we dodged a major bullet. Our beaches are still beautifully white, our fisheries appear to be healthy and getting stronger, and we've had record tourism over the past two years, partly because of the ubiquitous, BP-funded advertising campaign.

If there's any kind of silver lining from the 2010 spill, its color is actually a distinctive shade of green—as in cash money. The dark clouds of oil that poured into the Gulf have since rained down billions of dollars upon the affected people. Just one small example: everyone in my neighborhood got a "loss of enjoyment" check for several thousand dollars just for living where we do. Mine cleared nicely.

And while BP has already doled out about \$30 billion, another money gusher is still on the way in the form of the RESTORE Act. This surprisingly creative acronym stands for Resources and Ecosystem Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012. I don't usually give kudos to the government, but that's pretty damn slick.

BP's funding of the RESTORE Act is still going through legal challenges, but it could reach as high as \$17 billion. TransOcean has already settled for almost \$1 billion. During the next year or so, a lot of that money will trickle down to the five states that border the Gulf of Mexico. If those big dollars make you feel sorry for BP, please don't. They've raked in more than \$35 billion in net profits since the oil spill.

I know all of these facts because I did some research on something called the World Wide Web, but mostly because I attended the Guy Harvey Fishery Symposium in November 2014 in St. Pete, Florida. In addition to discussing the RESTORE Act, the two-day gathering explored some of the sticky issues facing the oceans, like the lionfish invasion, a fledgling U.S. aquaculture industry and the Great Red

BP's funding of the RESTORE Act is still going through legal challenges, but it could reach as high as \$17 billion.



Valerie Gaynor, Science Coordinator for Martin County, Florida School District, presents Guy Harvey with a Thank You "note" signed by more than 1,000 students. Back row: Greg Jacoski, Director of Operation of the GH Ocean Foundation; David Wilkinson, GH Inc. Social Media Director; Tony Fins, Executive Director of the GHOF and Fred Garth, Editor of GHM.

Snapper Conundrum.

Headlined by the always-congenial Dr. Guy Harvey himself, the speakers included an all-star cast of marine scientists, non-governmental organizations, commercial and recreational fishing representatives, as well as officials from state and federal regulatory agencies. The GH Symposium is one of the only conferences that brings together divergent groups like commercial and recreational fishermen to work together on complex fishery issues.

"Ultimately, we all share the same ocean and we have to ensure sustainable use of our marine resources," Dr. Harvey said. "By bringing everyone together, we can better understand each other's point of view and find solutions we can all live with."

Probably the most anticipated forum was called "Red Snapper—Case Study—Can We Fix It?" The panel consisted of Jeff Miller, who represents recreational fishermen as the president of Florida's Coastal Conservation Association, and Jason De La Cruz, a longtime commercial fisherman. It was rounded out by four PhDs: Dr. Roy Crabtree of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Dr. Greg Stunz of Texas A&M University, Dr. Will Patterson of the University of South Alabama and Dr. Bob Shipp, who was director of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab in Mobile, Alabama, for more than 30 years.

Without getting into the nitty gritty, I'll just say that they all believe we can fix red snapper by employing two basic elements: one, keeping the fishery sustainable and, two, making sure that commercial and recreational fishermen can sit around a campfire sharing a wooly blanket, holding hands and singing "Kumbaya." The first part—sustainability—is happening. Snapper are growing faster than Taylor Swift's Twitter followers. However, not so much on that second part. The commercial/recreational fisherman relationship is rockier than, well, uh, a Taylor Swift love ballad.

When you consider that the red snapper season for sport fishermen has been reduced from 180 days in 2007 to just 11 days in 2014 and could be a scant one or two days in 2015, it's easy to understand why weekend warrior fishermen are outraged.

Dr. Shipp is one of the leading red snapper experts in the world and has been an outspoken advocate for longer snapper seasons. During his presentation, he proposed two alternatives to the current system. One is to let states manage the fishery rather than the feds. The other suggestion was to only fish within certain depths.

"I believe we could still fish for 180 days," Shipp said, "if we limit fishing to

depths of 25 fathoms (approximately 150 ft.) and not target the big breeders. That would leave huge areas of deep water for the population to continue to flourish."

Support for Shipp's ideas was mixed, but there was general agreement that the recreational season desperately needs attention, considering the massive impact millions of sport fishermen have on the economy.

"In addition to buying boats and fishing gear, recreational fishermen contribute generously to conservation organizations like the CCA," Miller said. "They also create the majority of the funding for state conservation efforts through fishing license purchases. I'm not against commercial fishing, but there has to be some parity for everyone, and right now it's unbalanced."

On the flip side, the commercial fishing industry is relatively content. They have Individual Fishing Quotas (IFQs) they abide by that allows them to fish all year but still limits their total catch. It's a system that is working well, partly because every fish is meticulously documented. In other words, their reporting is solid.

Unfortunately, catch reports from the hundreds of thousands of fishermen

who go out for fun rather than work is sketchy at best. As they say, it's like herding cats. There are plenty of Apps for reporting your daily catch, but getting fishers to use them has proven difficult. So, whether or not we can "fix red snapper" for sport fishing remains extremely murky.

The symposium's aquaculture panel was led by Don Kent, president of the Hubbs-SeaWorld Institute. While there's a tremendous amount of aquaculture research going on in the U.S., the amount of fish grown in the U.S. pales in comparison to the rest of the world. The U.S. imports some 80% of the seafood it consumes, yet only contributes about 1% to the planet's overall aquaculture production.

"The lack of a clearly defined regulatory framework has led U.S. investors to take aquaculture to other countries," Kent said. "There's a company in Mexico growing red drum [redfish] and selling them to the U.S. market. Why aren't we growing those fish here?"

While I can't say that this question and all the others discussed at the symposium were answered (we had to save time to work on that whole Mid-East peace thing), it feels good to move the conversation along in a positive direction.

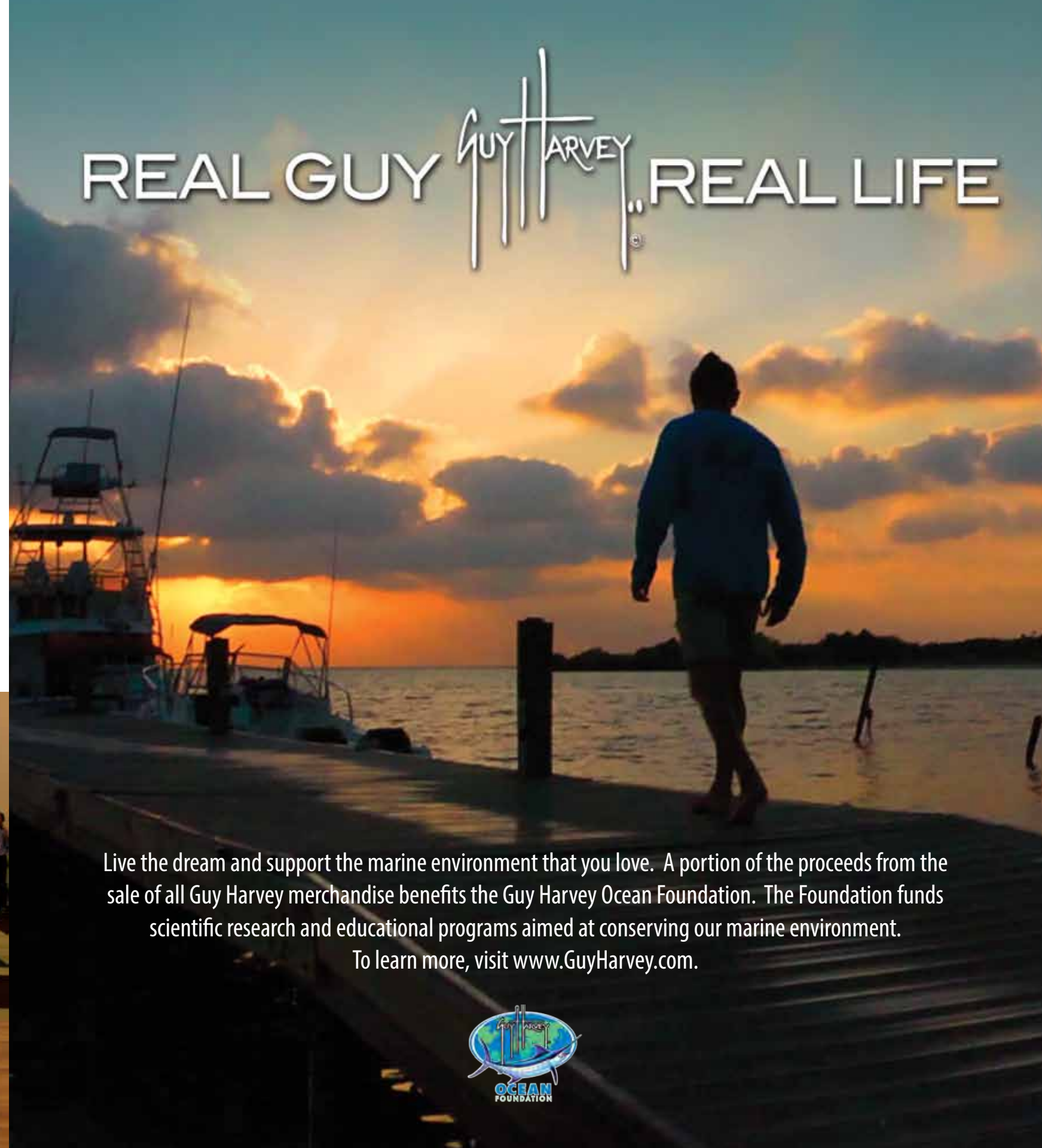
The symposium was sponsored by the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, *Guy Harvey Magazine*, Fresh from Florida, the Florida Institute of Oceanography, the Gulf & South Atlantic Fisheries Association, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, the University of South Florida—St. Petersburg and the Florida Attractions Association.

The third Guy Harvey Fishery Symposium is tentatively slated for September 2015. For more information, go to: www.guyharveyfisheriessymposium.com.



The symposium drew a large crowd of students, scientists, teachers, fishermen, NGOs and government regulators.

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