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THE PLUM LINE

The Official Newsletter of The Plum Island Surfcasters
P.O. Box 364 – Newburyport, MA 01950
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OCTOBER 2006

All fishermen are liars; it's an occupational disease with them like housemaid's knee or editor's ulcers. ~Beatrice Cook

Presidents Message

October is upon us, and so isn't blitzing schoolies and blues on our shorelines chasing peanut bunker. Big fish are there for those willing to brave the cold fall nights. The nights really aren't that bad if you dress for it. Dress to stay dry and don't forget the gloves and the wool hat. Cold hands and fingers can ruin an exceptional evening. There is still a number of categories open in the year long club tournament and the front runners are just a cast away from falling. There is about two weeks left till the end of the yearlong and the beginning of the die hard. Don't forget about the final leg of the tri state in Rhode Island at the end of the month. We're defending our title so we need a good turnout.

Tight lines and good luck,

JR's Program

At the last outing in September we rescheduled to Saturday the 30th. After driving out on the beach, and setting up around mile marker 17. We put the rods out and set up the grill for burgers and dogs. Once the sun set the action heated up and from 7-9:30 p.m. The kids were catching fish as soon as the bait hit the water. By 9:30 the kids had gone thru 4 dozen sea worms and 3 mackerel. The next kid's trip will be Friday October 13th. Again meet at Surfland by 5:30 p.m. so we can get a head count and I can figure out how much bait we need. Make sure the kids dress for the cold and have rubber boots.

K. Moore



I wanted to say thank you to everyone who worked the booth at the fair. Mostly the folks from the Plum Island Kayakers. I am pleased to announce that not only did we take a blue ribbon first prize for the booth but we got a special award for the best booth in our category at the fair. The booth looked great and I hope that all had a great time, the weather was great and they had a record turnout for the fair. Thanks -Bonnie

LEGISLATION

Massachusetts Fishery Update - October 2006
-Chuck Casella

Massachusetts DMF Addresses Dogfish Problem

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (Mass DMF) has taken advantage of recent spiny dogfish stock assessments to initiate a movement to reopen a small-scale directed commercial fishery for the species. The scientific analysis to support this movement to reopen this fishery was presented to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission by Mass DMF Deputy Director Dr. David Pierce. The highlights of that analysis identify the fact that spiny dogfish is no longer overfished, that overfishing is not occurring and predation on juvenile cod by dogfish is hampering cod rebuilding efforts.

Over the past several years, spiny dogfish have infested both the inshore and offshore areas of Massachusetts Bay and the Gulf of Maine. Both the party/charter boat and private vessel recreational angling communities have been severely affected by the 'infestation' of this species. On the offshore grounds, tuna fishing along with groundfish fishing have seen trips steadily become efforts in futility. Dogfish are so thick that boats are at times surrounded by the hundreds of dogfish. Natural baits intended for tuna, bluefish, and groundfish are immediately inhaled by the swarms of the dogfish. Some charter captains even report that they can hear the dogfish bumping into the hull of their boats. The inshore waters have experienced those same problems while targeting striped bass, fluke, winter flounder and sea bass.

Currently, the ASMFC annual coast-wide commercial quota for spiny dogfish is 4 million pounds with a 600-pound trip limit. This basically equates to a by-catch fishery. Under the proposals set forth by Mass DMF, the spiny dogfish quota would increase to 6 million pounds and there would be a 3,000-pound daily trip limit. These increases would allow for a small-scale directed commercial fishery which would be a welcoming event for the recreational sector in Massachusetts. The ASMFC will be addressing this issue at the October meeting and will likely hand down a decision for the 2007 fishing year.

Cod fishing in Gulf of Maine to close November 1st

As it has been reported to the club in recent updates, the New England Fisheries Management Council (NEFMC) will be implementing a closure to recreational cod fishing in federal waters of the Gulf of Maine starting November 1 and running until March 31, 2007. This action is part of an ever-growing effort to reduce the mortality of cod in the Gulf of Maine and help the cod rebuilding efforts. During this closure, recreational anglers will still be allowed to target and retain other groundfish species such as pollock, haddock, whiting, hake, wolfish and cusk.

The NEFMC is responsible for management of federal waters (known as the EEZ). Since the federal waters of the Gulf of Maine border the state water jurisdiction of Massachusetts, there is the likelihood of a shift in commercial and recreational cod fishing effort to our state waters if Massachusetts doesn't implement complimentary closures. Although they have not announced it as of the writing of this update, anglers should be aware that Massachusetts will very likely implement the same closure schedule as the NEFMC closure. If you had any plans to put some cod fillets in the freezer for the winter, I'd strongly suggest you make plans to get out before November 1st. However, this closure is only for the Gulf of Maine. Boats that fish south of Cape Cod and on George's Bank are not subject to this closure.

REFRESHMENTS

NO TIME TO EAT BEFORE THE MEETING, NO WORRIES!

The refreshment committee will be offering a nice home cooked meal before each meeting for a donation of \$3.00. So come **HUNGRY!**

October: Striped Bass Chowder
November: Award Banquet

Coffee and snacks will continue to be offered for a small donation.

The refreshment committee and the JR. Surfcasters Thank You for your continued support

TOURNAMENTS

Plum Island Year Long – May 1st – October 31st

Exotics – October 1st – November 1st

Tri-State Tournament – Rhode Island Leg – October 27th, 28th, 29th

Die Hard – November 1st – November 30th

2006 SCHEDULE:

Oct 17 – Round Table Discussion

Nov 18 – Saturday Awards Banquet/Photo Contest/Fish Stories

Dec 19 – Yankee Swap – Gifts and Desserts

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