

The shad finally made their presence known.

And, with any luck, as you read this report I'll be out on the high seas trying for cod and haddock. I can't wait.

Kay Moulton of Surfland on Plum Island gave me the good news. Kay said that anglers were catching shad at the Rocks Village Bridge. She said that while the fishing was not fast and furious, some of the fishermen were picking up one or two fish on shad darts. George Bossi, while fishing near Lawrence, actually caught twelve shad. Kay heard of striped bass being caught at the (Plum Island) point but thought that the bass might have been winter "hold overs".

Rene Vigneault of Bridge Bait and Tackle on Route 1 in Salisbury had heard of a few shad being caught. And, he said, many people were out there trying for stripers with none to be caught. Rick says "by Mothers' Day".

Mike Weiner of "Go Fish" in West Newbury confirmed the shad reports. Mike said that the shad were working their way up river, where many boats and fishermen were awaiting them. In addition, Mike gave another outstanding fresh water fishing report. "The Artichoke Reservoir is "on fire", he said. He said that largemouth bass were going into their spawning areas and that fishing for them was very good. Mike further reported that crappie and perch were being caught at the Cherry Hill Reservoir, and that all the ponds were stocked with trout, the trout hitting well. The "Go Fish" fly-fishing clinic should be starting soon; you will need to call 978-363-1867 for reservations and then sign up at the shop.

I spoke with Ryan of Captain's Parties on Plum Island. They had a good day last Sunday, he said, with more haddock than cod (60/40 mix) with two of the haddock being ten pounders. Sunday's pool fish was a 22 lb. cod, caught on clams. Ryan said that there were more keepers being caught and that the fishing was picking up steadily. Please give Chris or George Charos a call at 1-800-427-1333 to make your reservations.

Rick LaPierre, skipper of the Yellow Bird in Newburyport wrote that fishing was on and off last week. Rick is still reporting a 50/50 cod and haddock mix, with a larger percentage of keepers. The Yellow Bird's largest fish last week was an eighteen-pound codfish. You may call 1-888-234-3531 for Yellow Bird reservations.

As always, I thank Kay and Martha Moulton, Paul and Mike Weiner, Rick Vigneault and the local sport-fishing captains for their forecasts and news. If you have your own stories, please call me, John Altson, at 978-499-9972 with your news, recipes, and stories Better yet; send them by e-mail to altson@us.ibm.com. I'd love to hear from you. This column is available, along with other good fishing reports, on www.surfcaster.com.

Have a great weekend!