

The striped bass are still around, but finicky. Watch for the basking shark!

Martha Moulton, of Surfland on Plum Island, said that the stripers were back at the sand bar at the mouth of the river at low tide; anglers fishing at that location weighed in bass from 12 lbs. to 23 lbs., many of them using clams as bait. Martha said that the boat fishermen were getting lots of “schoolies” while fishing Joppa Flats during day time high tides; on some occasions, these same (frustrated) fishermen watched large bass roll around playfully, ignoring their frozen mackerel baits. Martha reported a few fishermen catching bluefish on lures while working the backside of the sand bar. Martha’s final comments were on the flounder fishing: One angler had been fishing just offshore of where the church had been, having continued success using sea worms as bait.

Rene Vigneault of Bridge Bait and Tackle in Salisbury confirmed that the fishing had picked up. Rene said that his colleague, Paul DeFrancisco, had been fishing just outside of the mouth of the river, picking up a 37 lb. striper while chumming and using fresh herring as bait. Rene told me that there were some bluefish around at the river’s mouth, but more in the Parker River. Rene concluded by saying that the pesky dogfish were still around, even for surfcasters.

Paul Hogg, of Crossroads Bait and Tackle in Salisbury said that Mike Gosselin landed a 50”, 41 lb. bass on one of his charters. Mike was fishing just outside the river mouth using live pollock as bait. Paul said that Joppa (striper) fishing was still decent for those anglers using live eels at night. Paul suggested that the stripers were less keen on chunk herring fished on the bottom, and more apt to hit a (whole) herring drifted without the use of weights. Paul went on to say that his charters were recently into giant bluefish (15lbs. to 18lbs.) fishing on a ledge about eight miles out. On the tuna fishing, Paul commented that the “football” size tuna were just starting, with his expectation that the “big ones” would follow soon. Call Paul at the shop (978-499-8999) for charters on his boat “Hogg Tide”.

Paul Hogg said that one of his customers has spotted a large basking shark just inside the jetty. While basking sharks are harmless, the large fin must have turned some eyes!

George Charos of Captains Parties on Plum Island said that the offshore fishing was “still good”, although the fishing for blues on the half-day boat was “sour”. While fishing offshore on the full-day boat, Paul Cyr (of Worcester) won the pool honors with a 20 lb. cod, as did Ed Burke (of Merrimack) with a 34 lb. cod. George has been boating large cod to the 30s and large pollock in the 20s. Bring your jigs! Please give Chris or George Charos a call at 1-800-427-1333 to make your reservations.

Captain Rick LaPierre of the Yellow Bird wrote last week: “ WE CREAMED THEM. Plenty of fish for everyone.... Jim Warmsey won his 5th pool with a 21 3/4lb pollock. Open spots for Sunday and thru the week. Call and book now.” Please call 1-888-234-3531 for Yellow Bird reservations.

As always, I thank Kay and Martha Moulton, Paul and Mike Weiner, Paul Hogg, Rene 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!