

Behemoth bluefish bite bewildered baitfish by bountiful boats...

Well, Hurricane Isabel damaged more egos than anything else. Evidently quite a few anglers pulled in their boats and/or their lobster traps and, by so doing, missed out on some spectacular (almost) fall fishing.

Last Sunday Oscar Boreth, Tom Dunphy and I went out on Oscar's boat to try for blues. Isabel was long gone, and the seas were flat – it was a beautiful day marked with awesome bluefishing and quite a few bobbing seals.

We trolled along the beach at Plum Island and quickly hit some very large bluefish. We then cast lures for a while, trolled for a while and continued to battle the blues in the process. Bluefish, as you know, are really nasty fish with very sharp teeth – they bit through the line several times and demolished my cute little Wildeye Swim Bait lures. Be sure to bring lots of wire leaders!

We stopped fishing after a few hours when, quite frankly, we had enough 8 lb. – 10 lb. fish. I'll never forget, however, the sight of the water literally boiling with blues and baitfish. If Sunday was my last trip for the season, it was a helluva a way to end it.

Kay Moulton of Surfland on Plum Island said, "The bluefish are everywhere!" She said that the boats were slamming them and that the bluefish made periodic forays into the surf. Kay also told me of some small striped bass being caught off the beach at the Plum Island Refuge.

Paul Hogg of Crossroads Bait and Tackle in Salisbury was out bluefishing on his boat Hogg Tide when I called him. Paul was "killing" the blues while trolling lures. Paul had (earlier that week) been picking up a few striped bass, but no huge ones.

Rene Vigneault of Bridge Bait and Tackle in Salisbury said that Paul DeFrancisco had landed some large stripers, to 28 lbs., while trolling umbrella rigs at the mouth of the river. Paul had also pulled alongside of a huge ocean sunfish, stopping to pat it on the fins. Rene's friend, Smelly Bob Bush had "tons of blues" last Sunday, making him all the smellier, I guess.

George Charos of Captains Parties on Plum Island said that his half-day boat was into "lots of blues". Last Sunday the boat landed over 200 bluefish in the two trips and had hit them hard on Saturday too. As to the offshore fishing, George told me that it was "ok", with pool fish in the twenties and a few large pollock still around.

Captain Rick LaPierre of the Yellow Bird wrote recently: "Today we changed direction and headed south to Tillies. We had a steady pick of fish for most of the day, with a little slow down at the end of the day. There were two yearly pools updated today, a pollock of 36lb 6oz, and a haddock of 10lb 8oz." 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 in the "Plum Island Surfcaster's" section. To go to the 2003 Plum Island Local Fishing News directly, visit http://plumisland.surfcaster.com/local_fishing_news2003.htm

Have a great weekend!