

Hurry up and enjoy some great fall fishing!

While this will be my last column of the year, I'm ending on a good note. The striped bass fishing and bluefishing are excellent and could be until the next big storm (Jeanne?).

The first report comes from Kay Moulton at Surfland. Kay said that there were "lots of fish" along the oceanfront. Kay said that stripers (to 18 lbs.) and bluefish were all along the Plum Island refuge – the bass hitting worms and the bluefish hitting plugs. Kay said to try the mouth of the river on the incoming tide for bluefish; she also said that the boats were hammering the bluefish outside.

Rene Vigneault of Bridge Bait and Tackle in Salisbury again spoke of excellent fishing – "unbelievable" bluefishing at the mouth of the river. Rene said that he is selling "tinker herring" – small ones – and that these herring were bringing his customers some nice bass to 39 inches. Paul DeFrancisco's back surgery went well... he is on the road to recovery.

Chris Charos, from Captain's Parties on Plum Island said that they terminated the half-day bluefish trips but might restart them again, given the good fishing. Chris said that the haddock fishing was good, with a mix of cod and pollock. Pool fish last week were cod "in the 30's" and an 18 lb. pollock. Please give Chris or George Charos a call at 1-800-427-1333 to make your reservations.

Captain Rick of the Yellow Bird wrote about last Sunday's fishing: "Absolutely beautiful day on the ocean today, we were able to drift the whole day. The fishing was average, with a mix of fish coming aboard. The haddock might have edged out the rest with the pollock coming a close second. The dogs were present, but not as heavy as they have been the last couple of days." You may call 1-888-234-3531 for Yellow Bird reservations.

To all: Have a great off-season; I'll see you in the spring of '05.

As always, I thank Kay and Martha Moulton, Rene Vigneault, Paul DeFrancisco, Paul Hogg 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!