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THE PLUM LINE

The Official Newsletter of The Plum Island Surfcasters
P.O. Box 364 – Newburyport, MA 01950
<http://plumisland.surfcaster.com>

MAY 2005

The stripers are in! The stripers are in!

Well, at least that's what they tell me. I heard that a few fresh schoolies were caught on the Plum Island beachfront (or what is left of it) earlier in the week. My first day out greeted me with 30mph winds, a cold driving rain, and unfishable, weedy surf. Are we having fun yet? Well, on the bright side, when the weather does break, it will be time, and the fish will be in and hungry! I hope by the time you all get this newsletter, you have made the time to get out to the beach and have caught your first fish of the season.

Good Luck!
Joe Camilliere

May 17 – Al Gags, “Fishing the Entire Water Column.” Includes pencil poppers, needle fish and surf dancer minnows.

WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW CLUB MEMBERS

Lee Avery
David Stamatis
Aaron Quinlan

HOT SPOTS

Castle Neck River at Crane's Beach by J.P. Gregoire

When a bit of solitude is needed or when I would just enjoy a change of scenery while fishing I will usually find myself at an underutilized spot at the estuary behind Cranes Beach known as the Castle Neck River. From May to September this spot holds Stripers from schoolie size up to 40 inches or more. On any given day the average size striper will run between 18 to 28 inches. Bluefish will often invade these waters during these same months and provide some great top water action.

Conditions: Gentle currents, few hazards and the available structure rarely changes. This spot offers sandy flats and shell beds that drop off into deeper boat access channels.

Time and Tide: From my experience I have found that prime time here is 2 hours before Low tide until 2 hours after the incoming tide. Of course there are times when fish will be active from 4 hours before Low tide to 3 hours after the incoming. Check your local tide charts for the most opportune times to fish this spot.

Methods: This is a reasonably protected area so unless there are unusually windy conditions this spot will have virtually flat water most of the time. At dawn and in the early morning fish can be seen actively feeding at or near the surface. It is not unusual for one to see breaking fish in many spots all along this estuary. When this happens fishing can get to be rather exciting with resulting fish counts well into double digits.

Flat water, fish feeding near the surface means I will be using top water lures 99% of the time. I will use these opportunities to hone my top water fishing skills using small poppers, pencil poppers, and jumping minnows. On rare occasions I will switch to rubber baits such as bass assassins.

Wildlife and other creatures: In the dim light of pre-dawn you may get the sense that even though you are the only human type creature fishing this area you may feel the weight of other sets of eyeballs on your shoulders. Take the time to look around once and a while and you will see white tail deer, coyotes, wild turkeys, the ubiquitous skunks and a variety of other denizens of the marsh and woodlands giving you the once over. Of course along with the wildlife comes other unwanted types of creatures such as ticks and mosquitoes so be prepared with your repellants and stay out of the brush.

Parking and Access: From 8 AM to 7 PM you must park in the approved lot at Cranes Beach. The cost, M-F is \$8.00; on weekends the fee is \$15.00. However, these are not your typical fishing hours so this is what you will need to do to park during prime time fishing hours.

Get yourself down to the Ipswich town hall and obtain an overnight parking sticker that will cost you less than \$10 dollars. This will allow you overnight parking privileges until December 31st of the year purchased. Fisherman parking is allowed from 7PM to 7AM in a small dirt lot on the road edge with room for 5 or 6 vehicles just to the left of and outside of the main gate. Without the sticker chances are you will be ticketed.

Directions: From the north or the Newburyport area. Take Rte 1A south to Ipswich, just south of Ipswich Center and after crossing over the Ipswich River take a left onto Argilla Road and follow it 3.8 miles to Cranes Beach.

From the south or from Rte 128, take Rte 1A (exit 20A) towards Hamilton. Take Rte 1A north 8 miles to Rte 133 (Essex Road). Take a right onto Rte 133 and follow it 1.8 miles to Northgate Road, Take a left onto Northgate Road and follow it .6 of a mile to Argilla road. Take a right onto Argilla Road for 2 miles to the Cranes Beach Main Gate.

From the overnight parking area take the access road on the extreme right of the main entrance to Cranes Beach. It is a short 10-minute walk to the old Ferry Landing on the Castle Neck River. I will usually proceed past the Ferry Landing until I get to Monument Rock, which is a great pile of fieldstones on the edge of the woodlands just where the salt meadow grass begins. Good Luck and good fishing.

Anyone needing additional information about this spot see me at the monthly meeting or contact me via e-mail at JeanPaul@adelphia.net.

2005 Junior Program Dates At The Wildlife Refuge

May 7th SAT: Intro to fly-fishing

May 8th SUN: Annual casting clinic at the Newbury upper green pond and field

June 11th SAT: Annual mackerel fishing trip (time to be announced)

June 24th, 25th, 26th: Camp and fish (site to be announced)

July 29th, FRI: Surf fishing Plum Island

Aug. 26th FRI: Overnighter Parker River Wildlife Refuge

Sept. 17th SAT: September beach blast

Sept. 30th, FRI: Overnighter Parker River Wildlife Refuge

JUNIOR YEAR-LONG TOURNAMENT HAS ITS REWARDS

Once again this year, Plum Island Surfcasters will be giving a free fishing charter trip to two of its Junior members along with one adult for each winner. To be eligible to win the trip, a Junior member must have entered at least one fish in the PISC yearlong tournament, any category. All Juniors entering fish will have their name put in (only once) for the raffle/selection. The two winners will be announced at the Awards Banquet in the fall. See Kevin Moore for more details. The 2004 winners will be announced at the May meeting and will be published in next month's newsletter.

MASSACHUSETTS REGULATORY UPDATE

By Chuck Casella

The latest round of Mass Marine Fisheries regulations were announced last month by the Mass Division of Marine Fisheries. Those that relate to member activity include the following:

- Commercial Striped Bass Season

Start Date:

Tuesday, July 12th, 2005

Open Fishing Days/Daily Catch Limit (per boat, not per person if multiple people onboard):

Sundays - 5 (five) fish

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday - 30 (thirty) fish

No Fishing Days:

Monday, Friday, Saturday

- Commercial fishing for groundfish while engaged in for-hire fishing will be prohibited.

- Recreational minimum size for fluke was increased from 16.5" to 17".

- The Division of Marine Fisheries withdrew their proposal to amend River Herring regulations for this season but will pursue changes for the 2006 season.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions related to this year's changes (978.352.9617 chuckcasella@verizon.net). For a full list of current regulations, please visit the Mass DMF website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries

BOAT US SEABROOK dates for Spring Classes - Monday Eve 6 – 10pm

Tuition \$79.00, Pre-registration required – Seating limited

Contact Boatwise 800-698-7373 or email: Captains@boatwise.com

5/1 - Basic Navigation

5/9 - Basic Navigation continued

5/16 - GPS Chart Plotters

5/23 - Basic Radar Operation

2005 EVENTS CALENDAR FOR PLUM ISLAND SURFCASTERS

May 28/29 - Plum Island Club Invitational Tournament

June 3, 4, &5 - Tri-State Fishing Tournament in Cape Cod, MA

Jun 21 - Mike Spinney, “Fishing the Piscataqua River.”

Jul 19 - Roger Aziz, Jr., “Stripers Below The Merrimack River Dam.”

Aug 16 - Chris Schoppmeyer, NOAA Special Agent, “Who is Responsible for Enforcing Wildlife and Marine Laws?”

Sept 2, 3 & 4- Tri-State Fishing Tournament in Old Orchard, ME

Sept 17 - Annual Beach Blast, fishing from sunrise, casting and food and lots of fun for all -

Sept 20 – Gene Borque, “Fishing the Elizabeth Islands.”

Oct 18 TBA

Oct - Tri-State Fishing Tournament in Westerly, RI

Nov – No Meeting on Tuesday Night.

Nov 19 - Awards Banquet – This is a Saturday Night Award Dinner, Photo Contest and Fish Stories. Exec Board to supply Turkey and Ham, bring side dishes (salads, desserts h'ordourves).

Dec 20 - Yankee Swap - Gifts with Coffee and Deserts

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A fisherman returned to shore with a giant marlin that was bigger and heavier than he. On the way to the cleaning shed, he ran into a second fisherman who had a stringer with a dozen baby minnows. The second fisherman looked at the marlin, turned to the first fisherman and said, " Only caught one, eh?"

PLUM ISLAND 13TH ANNUAL INVITATIONAL FISHING TOURNAMENT

Date: May 28,2005 and May 29,2005
Duration: Tournament hours- Sunday, Midnight 00:01 to 09:00 AM
Place: Plum Island Turnpike at the Plum Island Airport Parking Lot.
Be in parking lot at 11:00 PM, Saturday night May 28 to register teams and review rules.
Registration: Pre-registration- Call Kevin McGrath 978-352-2403 no later than 8:00 PM for pre-registration and info. All participants must sign and submit liability waiver prior to being placed on a team.
Minors: Participating minors (under 18) must submit a signed parental permission note and be accompanied by an adult for the duration of the tournament.

Each participant in any tournament or fishing events sponsored or associated by the PISC hereby agrees to abide by the above rules and regulations set forth for those events. Further, each member participating in the above mentioned events expressly agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the PISC members of the Executive Board, its Advisory Board, members of the judging committee and Organizers of the tournament against any loss, claim, liability, personal injury or expense occurred either by them or against them arising in connection with their participation in the tournament or event, including court costs and reasonable attorney's fees.

By registering for the PISC tournament, I agree to abide by all tournament rules and regulations and acknowledge that I am fishing at my own risk. Any minors participating in the tournament must be accompanied by an adult at all times. The adult signature below assumes all responsibility for the actions, safety and well being of the minor registered.

Name: _____ **Address:** _____

Phone: _____

Club Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

(participant or guardian if accompanying a minor)