

SHELL BEACH LITERARY SOCIETY

A Word From The President...

Thanks to Dr. Schaffer for spearheading the effort to put this newsletter together. Hopefully it will become a fixture of communication for the club. We still have several people who are not on our email distribution list. I would ask everyone to send me an updated email address at cummings@jrco.com

CLUB UPDATE

The White Camp's siding and windows have been replaced. This improved the appearance of the Camp and should prevent any further water damage. In conjunction with the siding repair we have added an enclosed porch / grilling area on the side. The gnats and mosquitoes will have to wait to get us on the water instead of at dinnertime! A stainless steel natural gas grill has been installed on the porch. We

have also installed a fire escape door on the second floor above the ice shed. This door will allow you to step out onto the boat sheds and get away from any fire should you be trapped upstairs.

The cost for the renovations was significant but we are holding our own financially for now. The next major investment could test our reserves, however. We need to replace our aging septic system with a sewage treatment plant. Depending on contractor availability we could break ground on this project later this year.

Our membership currently stands at 53. I continue to encourage all of you to actively pursue anyone you know that might be interested in joining our club. For those of you who are unaware of our current cost structure, stock in the club costs \$2,750 with a one-time

initiation fee of \$2,000. The initiation fee can be paid in installments over a two-year period. Dues are \$75 per month thereafter.

Our annual fishing tournament weekend has been scheduled for June 24th and 25th. Coop's Place is catering the event this year and has promised to knock our socks off in terms of the food. Feel free to bring prospective members as guests to the fishing tournament. It's a great way to introduce both the club and the membership. Please let Martha know your plans regarding the weekend. Attendance has been down the last couple of years and it would be great to have a big turnout.

Tight Lines,

Joshua C. Cummings

In This Issue

A Word From Our President	1
Surf Fishing	2
New Boat Sheds?	2
Top-Water Trout Season	3
Shell Beach Fishing Tip #1	3
Coop to Cater Fishing Tournament	4
Shell Beach Fishing Tip #2	4



Surf Fishing

As many of you know I usually take an exotic fishing trip to the Florida Keys or Everglades each year. This year because of the timing of spring break and my long interest in surf fishing for pompano I decided to try something different.

BY JEFF SCHAFFER

As many of you know I usually take an exotic fishing trip to the Florida Keys or Everglades each year. This year because of the timing of spring break and my long interest in surf fishing for pompano I decided to try something different.

Last December I contacted one of the editors of the Florida Sportsman Magazine to see if I could locate a guide that knew how to fish pompano. My strategy worked and I found a Florida native from Destin (Scotty Whithurst) who loved to fish pompano (he is actually a fishing guide who in the off season surf fishes for pompano).

The guide actually uses the term "beach fishing" because unlike Louisiana style surf fishing you are not actually in the water. The fishing poles we used were 12 to 13 feet long. These huge poles were rigged with six ounce pyramid sinkers below a three foot fluorocarbon leader that contained two very small circular hooks set about two feet apart. Each hook was supported by a tiny hollow float that was painted chartreuse or pink. The sinker was also painted in these same colors.

Casting from the beach at waters edge the baited hooks (we used small sand fleas and small pieces of shrimp) were hurled about seventy yards out into the surf. The baits were placed either right in front of the sandbar or just beyond the bar. The rods were then placed in holders that were jammed in the sand.

A waiting game followed. We watched the tips of the rods for a strike. When it did come the circular hooks combined with the line tension usually set the hook. pompano are scrappy fighters and bringing them to the beach was a challenge.



Surf Fishermen on the Florida Gulf Coast

I ended up hooking nine pompano, two redfish, a bluefish, three or four whiting and a couple of catfish. My freezer now has an ample supply of pompano filets which cook up beautifully on my barbeque grill.

New Boat Sheds

We are again exploring the feasibility of building more boat sheds. Due to costs, this has never gone beyond the planning stages. However, we now have at least 7 members who have are willing to cover the costs assuming it is reasonable.

These sheds would be built between the Blue Camp and the road, and will accommodate larger boats with T-Tops. Mitch is looking into permits and is currently getting estimates on fill and construction. The more sheds we can commit to the lower the cost for each. Our best "ballpark" guess is somewhere in the \$5000-7000 range. Members who want a shed would need to pay their share up front and then would get an appropriate and fair amount of "free" use for however many years we agree to.

If you are interested please call me at 866-8484.

– Peter Waters



Top-water Trout Season

by *Warren Comeaux*

The season for top-water fishing for large female trout begins soon.

The full moon on May 23rd will be the first of active spawning. The best time will be three days before, and two days after the full moon. Each phase of the moon will be good, however. The female trout gorge themselves in preparation for the spawn. Then they replenish their systems. This cycle is repeated each month through September.

Mullets will attract larger trout. The east shoreline of Lake Borgne will hold long lines of mullets during the summer. You can also fish the interior Biloxi Marsh in ponds or the small islands in the outer bays. Charlie Thomason is probably one of the best top-water fishing guides in our area. He has made great trips with catches of 50 to 75 speckled trout. Many of these have been 3 to 5 pounds or more. Charlie readily admits that only six of his trips annually will be that good.

The MirrO Lure surface walkers, "He Dog" and "She Dog", are the most popular lures used for top-water fishing. You can have several strikes on a single cast. Vary your retrieve from "walking the dog" with a pause or a straight jerk and then a short pause. Let the trout take the lure until you can feel the pull. Then set the hook. **DO NOT** try to set the hook when you see the strike.

Continue to retrieve and hopefully, the trout will come back and strike again. Avoid yanking your lure back to the boat too hard for safety purposes.

SHELL BEACH FISHING TIP #1

SOUTH SHORELINE

by Warren Comeaux

May is the month when the 2+ lb trout are spawning on the South Shoreline. After May, the larger ones leave, but are replaced by smaller ones. If you are trolling the shoreline for redfish the trout are under your boat. You may catch a few at the shoreline, but the majority are out a bit.

One evening a couple of years ago, I was fishing spoons for redfish along the shoreline, and my guest was catching trout on top water directly behind the boat. Redfish are there year round, but you need a South or Southeast wind to make the effort worth it. The bottom is hard sand with shells here and there.

*The most productive stretch I've found is between the fort and the outlet for the gas plant (large sign). **Caution:** There is a concrete IGY marker the diameter of a wooden fence post about 50 feet off the shore near the rear of the fort. Some kind soul has placed thin white PVC on the shoreline about 50 feet east of it, but you know how long those last. The marker will be about 6" under the water at mean tide.*

COOPS PLACE TO CATER FISHING TOURNAMENT

by Jeff Cooperman

While I am only a recent member of the Club it has been my pleasure to be a guest visitor on quite a few occasions. I have always enjoyed these visits because of the obvious – fishing, as well as the camaraderie of the

members. Of course meal times will generate a crowd and some lively or great conversations can be heard particularly if Martinis have been served.

Food is my business as well as a passion. My tavern, Coop's Place, at 1109 Decatur St. in the French Quarter has been open for 22 years now serving a pretty complete menu late into the night. Over the years

the menu has grown with an increased focus on the use of fresh local products and Creole & Cajun favorite items. It has been my dream for a long time now to help host.

Last years dinner prepared by Drago's was great; I enjoyed quite a few of those delicious Char-grilled Oysters myself. Of course I want to "Knock Your Socks Off" so my proposal for a menu is below.

MENU

Plated Appetizers

Assorted Artisanal Cheese Platter with Crudite

Boiled Spiced Shrimp with Cocktail & Remoulade Sauces

Passed Appetizers

Grilled Marinated Lamb Ribs

Smoked Duck Quesadillas

Oyster Rockefeller in Mushroom Caps

Dinner

Turtle Soup with Sherry

Jumbo Lump Crabmeat Salad with Creole Tomatoes Vinaigrette

Grilled Beef Tenderloin Served with 2 Sauces (Smoked Tomato Hollandaise & Marchand Du Vin),

Truffled Yellow Grits & Asparagus

Dessert

Praline Parfait

SHELL BEACH FISHING TIP #2

WEST SHORELINE

by Paul Brown

I look forward to reading someone else's ideas on fishing the stumps off the west shoreline at Lebeuf's cut. I've left a lot of tackle there, some of it attached to pretty nice fish.

There are three bayous that empty into the lake on the west shoreline. The Southern most is just north of the gas pipeline (which used to hold redfish until they re-worked it). This is a small bayou that I can no longer get into due to silt.

On a falling tide, it's a Plan D place to fish the outflow. About a mile + further north is the second bayou. It is usually Plan A on a falling tide, as is about ¾ miles of the shoreline south of its entrance.

The third bayou is at the "corner" where the shoreline swings east toward Proctor Point. It's a Plan B on a falling tide late in the day. The second and third bayous are connected. Enter the second bayou, take the first right and the next right. The water can be very shallow & you have to feel your way to find the channel, but you can get through. There is a deep hole at the first turn, and a deeper one about 150 yards in from the third bayou.

For a mindless afternoon when there is a gentle South wind, drift north about 50 yards off the shoreline fishing live bait under a cork. When you catch a trout, drop the anchor & fish until they quit, pick up the anchor and continue on. You won't break any state records, but you won't suffer any brain damage either.