

Martha's Vineyard Surfcasters Association

December 2005 Newsletter

December 2005 Presidents Message

The weather was so nice in November it's hard to believe the holiday season is already upon us. In fact many of our members were catching fish right through the end of last month. My last outing of 2005 was at Quansoo on a warm, sunny day in mid-November. I really didn't care if I caught anything, it was so nice I just wanted to be out one more time. I watched the gannets bomb the water as I jigged a bucktail along the bottom. I plied the water for an hour and was about to leave when I felt a hit. And there he was! I was excited because I knew this could be my last bass of the year. As I unhooked the 25 incher, I watched his colors glisten in the light. I took a little more time than usual to admire this one before I turned him back. I wanted to have a visual image that would carry me through until next spring. That was the only fish I caught that day but it was well worth the trip.

Once again, many of our club members did very well in the Derby this year. It seems like Tom Kieras and Keith McArt are always on the leader board, doesn't it? Leong Ngor placed second in the Shore Grand Slam category which was quite a feat this year. Catching a shore bonito was like finding a needle in a haystack! Phil Cronin, Chip Bergeron and Bob Clay all took home plaques in the Fly Rod Division. Congrats to all of you!!

With the coming of the New Year it can only mean one thing.....our Annual Banquet is right around the corner. It will be held at the Old Whaling Church on January 28. This event gets bigger and better every year. I've said this before but without the hard work of some of our members this event wouldn't be as special as it is. I would like to extend a big thank you to Chuck Hodgkinson, our Raffle Chairman. It is due to his effort and organization that we are able raise the funds to donate to island organizations *and* go home with some pretty great prizes.

I hope everyone has a happy and healthy New Year and that next season the "big one" finds it's way to end of your line.

Tight Lines,

Jeff Sayre

2006 Awards Banquet and Raffle

Thanks to the 14 volunteer Surfcasters the raffle drive is in full swing for this year's banquet. Our annual raffle raises more than 50 percent of the club's funds which enable us to support all the local charities and fishing events throughout the year. Last year the support and generosity of 147 local merchants and off

island companies donated \$10,000 worth of merchandise. This enabled us to collect over \$3,500 from raffle ticket sales – thanks to all of you who chip in and buy tickets or participate in the silent auction. This year’s raffle should be even better than last year’s so be sure to mark January 28, 2006 on your calendar. For those members that are unable to attend this year’s event, raffle tickets are included in this mailing and can be returned with your annual dues. But if you would like to purchase additional tickets, just email Chuck Hodgkinson at cahodg@aol.com with your mailing address and how many additional raffle books you would like to buy. Checks can be made out to the MVSA and returns mailed to, MVSA, PO Box 3053, Edgartown, MA 02539.

Here is how it works:

Schoolies: 3 Tickets for \$5.00; Each ticket entered in drawings for “Schoolie” sized prizes.

Keepers: 2 Tickets for \$5.00; Each ticket entered in drawings for “Keeper” sized prizes.

Lunkers: 2 Tickets for \$10.00; Each ticket entered in drawings for guess what size prizes.

Short Casts

Membership Dues

Your membership dues for 2006 are due upon receipt of this newsletter. Our membership fees remain unchanged from last year.

Family \$35
Regular \$25
Senior (Age 65 & Over) \$10
Junior (16 & Under) \$10

Please make your checks out to the MVSA and return to: PO Box 3053, Edgartown MA 02539.

(Note-if you joined the organization for the first time within the last three months, the fee submitted will cover your 2006 dues).

Meeting Site

We have secured the use of the Martha’s Vineyard Rod & Gun Club facility in Edgartown for our monthly meetings. If you’ve never been there, please consider joining us for one of our upcoming meetings. The facility is heated and complete with a fireplace, kitchen, TV, DVD player and VCR which will enable us to spruce up our meetings with some recorded entertainment.

Annual Election of Officers

Our annual election of officers will take place at the Awards Ceremony and Banquet on Jan 28, 2006. The current slate of officers and committee chairman has agreed to serve another term, but additional names may be placed in nomination by contacting Jeff Sayre at 508-693-4841 or jeff@flyfishingthevineyard.com.

Current Officers

Jeff Sayre	President
Walter Lison	Vice President
Paul Schultz	Vice President
Ron Domurat	Treasurer, Membership Chairman
Bob Lane	Secretary
Paula Sullivan	Secretary
Phil Cronin	Program Chairman, Web-master
Chuck Hodgkinson	Prizes
Dave Nash	Action Committee Chairman

Striped Bass

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Striped Bass Management Board recently reported that stocks of striped bass are healthy. The population remains high at 65.3 million fish that is 10% higher than the *average* stock size for the previous five years. In addition, the female spawning stock biomass (the total weight of all spawning size fish) is estimated at 55 million pounds and is well above the target level of 38.6 million pounds.

The stock is not considered to be over fished and over fishing is not occurring. Total catch has risen to 5.2 million fish, a 33% increase since 2003. Recreational harvest and discards account for 72.5% of the total mortality, with the majority of fish harvested by anglers in Virginia, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maryland and North Carolina. The commercial catch has risen slightly to 1.42 million fish, with Maryland commercial fisheries accounting for half of the harvest.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources also recently announced that the 2005 striped bass juvenile index, a measure of striped bass spawning success in Chesapeake Bay, was 17.8, well above the 52-year average of 12.0. By comparison, recent YOY year indices were 2003- 35.0, 2002-6.0, 2001-40.0 and 1996-58.0, the highest ever recorded

Recent Web-Site Survey Results

We thought you might be interested in the response to a recent MVSA web site question regarding striped bass. The question was: *What size does a striped bass have to be before you consider it a "big fish"?* The results appear to indicate that most of our members are "big fish" anglers as 61% of the respondents didn't consider a striper big until it reached forty inches with fish larger than 40" receiving 28% of the vote. Other results were: 20"-3%, 24"-0%, 28"-3%, 32"-6%, 36"-28%.

Web-master Phil Cronin says he considers anything with fins a big fish!

Final In House Derby Standings

Note: With the exception of the Junior Division, plaques will be awarded to first place finishers only.

Junior Division (Under 16)

Shore Striped Bass Release

1. Conor Smith 19.00"
2. Liam Smith 14.00"

Shore Bluefish Release

1. Jake Gubitose 26"
2. Olivia Connly 25"
3. Thomas Cron 22"

Boat Bonito

1. Jake Gubitose 6.0lbs
2. Adam Cron 5.8lbs

(Open Division- Age 16-64)

Shore Striped Bass

1. Keith McArt 42.54lbs
2. Bob Jacobs 28.60lbs
3. Janet Messineo 25.70lbs

Shore False Albacore

1. Ralph Peckham 9.96lbs
2. Sue Geresy 9.59lbs
3. Bob DiGiantommaso 9.00lbs

Shore Striped Bass Release

1. Ron Domurat 44.50"
2. Paul Apuzzo 43.00"
3. Mark Wrabel 41.00"

Shore False Albacore Flyrod

1. Gary Mirando 10.86"

Boat False Albacore Flyrod

1. Phil Cronin 12.86lbs

Shore Striped Bass Flyrod Release

1. Gary Mirando 42.00"
2. Chuck Hodgkinson 41.50"

Boat False Albacore Release

1. Peter Hermann 25"

Boat Striped Bass

1. Steve Baccelli 31.52lbs

Boat Bonito

1. Vince Frye 6.80lbs

Boat Striped Bass Flyrod Release

1. Jeff Sayre 38.00"

Boat Bonito Release

1. Peter Hermann 24.50"

Shore Bluefish

1. Tom Kieras 12.27lbs
 2. Ron Domurat 8.05lbs
 3. Bob Digiantommaso 6.02lbs

Boat Bonito Flyrod Release

1. Peter Herman 25.00"

Shore Bluefish Release

1. Paul Schultz 32.00"

Shore Bonito

1. Leong Ngor 7.16lbs

Shore Grand Slam

1. Leong Ngor 32.03lbs

Boat Grand Slam

1. Steve Baccelli 55.34lbs

Abe Williams Memorial Award-Largest All Tackle Shore Striped Bass-Keith McArt, 42.54lbs.

Senior Division (Age 65& Over)**Boat Striped Bass**

1. Lois Kelly Stout 38.62lbs
 2. Ed Lepore 24.57lbs

Shore False Albacore

1. Peter Johnson 9.02lbs
 2. Al Premo Jr. 8.43lbs

Boat Striped Bass Release

1. Ed Amaral 36.00"

Boat False Albacore

1. Ed Lepore 9.71lbs

Shore Bluefish

1. Winslow Crocker 12.00lbs
 2. George Gomez 10.93lbs
 3. Dan Geary 8.90lbs

Shore Bonito

1. George Gomez 6.44lbs

Shore Bluefish Release

1. Ed Amaral 30.00"

Boat Bonito

1. Ed Lepore 7.50lbs

Shore Bluefish Flyrod

1. Ed Amaral 5.91lbs

Boat Grand Slam

1. Ed Lepore 49.08lbs

Boat Bluefish

1. Jim Cornwell 10.14lbs
2. Don Wheeler 9.69lbs
3. Ed Amaral 7.57lbs

Boat Bluefish Flyrod

1. Ed Lepore 4.25lbs

2006 MVSA Calendar of Events

January 28, 2006-Annual MVSA Awards Ceremony, Banquet and Awesome Raffle
12:00PM, Old Whaling Church Edgartown,

February 7, MVSA Monthly Meeting
7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

March 14, MVSA Monthly Meeting
7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

April 11, MVSA Monthly Meeting
7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

June 13, MVSA Monthly Meeting
7:00PM, Site TBA

July 8, Annual MVSA Summer Picnic
5:00PM, Bend In The Road Beach, Edgartown

Fourth Annual Members Only Chappaquiddick Shark Tournament
July 22-August 6

September 10-October 14, 61st Martha's Vineyard Striped Bass & Bluefish Derby

November 14, MVSA Monthly Meeting
7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

December 12, MVSA Monthly Meeting (pizza night)

7:00PM, Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club

January 27, 2007, Annual MVSA Awards Ceremony, Banquet and Awesome Raffle

12:00PM, Old Whaling Church, Edgartown

Worth Noting

Congratulations to MVSA members who once again staged an impressive performance in the 60th Annual Martha's Vineyard Striped Bass and Bluefish Derby. Over forty members or almost a third of our total membership won prizes including seven division awards, thirteen weekly awards, four grand slam pins and fifty-eight daily awards.

Phil Cronin led the way by **WINNING** the Flyrod Boat False Albacore Division with a 12.86lb behemoth followed by Bob Clay who placed third in the same division with an 11.73lb fish caught on the same day and within an hour of Phil's.

Leading the way for the MVSA in the Shore Flyrod Division was Chip Bergeron who finished third.

Leong Ngor placed second in the coveted and difficult All Tackle Grand Slam Division. One of only two Shore Grand Slams weighed in. Steve Baccelli, Ed Lepore, and Jim Cornwell all won special pins for their accomplishments in the All Tackle Boat Grand Slam Division.

Keith McArt placed second in the All Tackle Shore Striped Bass Division with a 42.54lb fish. His second 42lb fish in two years and second consecutive top three finish.

On the last day of the Derby, Tom Kieras pulled out a second place finish in the All Tackle Shore bluefish Division edging out fellow member Win Crocker who took third. Tom's second top three finish in three years.

Weekly winners: George Gomez, Gary Mirando, Phil Cronin, Fran Clay (3), Sue Geresy, Janet Messineo, (2), Lois Kelly Stout, Leong Ngor (2), and Keith McArt.

Daily winners:

Four pins: Tom Kieras, Ralph Peckham, Bob (Hawkeye) Jacobs

Three Pins: Phil Horton, Ed Amaral

Two Pins: George Gomez, Jack Livingston, Keith McArt, Janet Messineo, Ed Jerome, Ron Domurat, Jim Cornwell, Steve Baccelli, Jamie Campbell, Bob McKay, Ed Lepore, Lois Kelly Stout, Win Crocker, and Oh Keong.

One pin: George Moran, Phil Henning, Sherm Goldstein, Dennis Williams, Joe Dart, Peter Hermann, Pat Paquette, Jim Henderson, Leong Ngor, Chip Bergeron, Rick Dwyer and Steve Purcell.

Drag Maintenance

An often overlooked but important element of reel maintenance is the drag. Here are a few tips for a quick and easy way to a cleaner and smoother drag.

1. Items needed: tray, paper towels, lacquer thinner, denatured alcohol, reel grease or “Super Lube”, small tin brush.
2. Disassemble drag being careful not to let the washer-retaining spring go flying off to parts unknown. Be sure to pay attention to the washer sequence so the drag can be re-assembled correctly. Soak the fiber or felt washers in lacquer thinner. Do not soak the metal washers.
3. Clean the drag housing thoroughly with brush dipped in lacquer thinner. Wipe the housing clean with a paper towel.
4. Wash the felt or fiber washers that have been soaking with denatured alcohol then wipe dry with paper towel. Metal washers should also be cleaned with paper towel.
5. To lube or not to lube? Some good reel mechanics, as well as Penn and Van Staal recommend running the drags dry or without any kind of lubrication. Other experienced anglers, as well as manufactures such as Shimano and Daiwa, recommend the use of some kind of lubricant like reel grease or “Super Lube” synthetic, specifically on the felt or fiber washers. If you decide to lube your washers, rub the lubricant into both sides of the washers, making sure the grease covers the entire surface and soaks into the washer.
6. Re-assemble the drag in the proper sequence.
7. Keeping pressure on it, re-insert the drag washer retaining spring until it clicks into slot on the spool.
8. Place the drag knob back on the reel.
9. One last tip! At the end of every trip and before you store the reel for the winter, back off on the drag to take pressure off of the washers to allow the felt and fiber washers to “billow” or return to their original size. Remember to retighten the drag knob prior to your next trip.

Darters

By: Ron Domurat

The waters surrounding the Vineyard are full of fast moving water that sometimes move at speeds up to four knots over bars, points and in and out of our numerous ponds and harbors. Perfect places for the use of a lure that every good Island surf angler should have in his or her surf bag- a *darter*. Most of us know by now that

these areas attract large numbers of baitfish as well as larger predators that lie in wait just outside the current, waiting for a tasty morsel to swim by to provide an easy meal. There are many ways to fish these areas but for my money you can't beat a darter. While the lure may not look like much, the size approximates that of most of the larger baitfish frequenting our waters like squid, herring, bunker and mackerel, and the tapered front third of the lure produces a wide zigzag swimming action that is second to none.

With the renaissance in custom wooden lure making recently, there are a number of quality made darters on the market but the two primary manufactures are Gibbs out of Providence RI and Super Strike from Farmingdale NY. Gibbs manufactures a wooden variety in a number of sizes including 1 3/8 oz. as well as 2 and 3 oz. models. The lures are available, in both solid colors as well as blended combinations like black/purple and black/silver. Other colors are available including a mackerel finish. The two-ounce model appears to be the best of the three sizes. It casts well and the narrow profile digs in better than it's smaller and larger cousins. One major drawback to the smaller versions is that they are not thru-wired which means that eventually, the belly hook is going to pull out and you are going to lose a fish. Another disadvantage of most wooden lures is that hook swing and hits from bluefish are eventually going to take their toll on the finish. The possible exception being custom made lures that have super acrylic finishes.

The other manufacturer of quality darters is Super Strike. Legendary Montauk surf angler Don Muso developed the Super Strike darter as well as others in this great line of lures. Muso wanted lures he could cast out beyond the Montauk surf even in the face of a stiff wind and lures that could stand up to the abuse handed out by the big fish that frequent the area. The Super Strike version is a plastic two-ounce model that is available in a variety of blended color combinations as well as solids and a clear amber version that is deadly when squid are in abundance. The lure casts beautifully into the wind and sports a baked on acrylic paint job that stands up well to hook swing and bluefish teeth.

The use of darters should be considered in areas of fast moving water like pond openings and rips such as Wasque or the "Chops". The secret to fishing a darter is to be sure the lure digs into the current and is swimming below the surface in that rhythmic zigzag pattern that is so seductive to stripers and bluefish. A quick downward or sideways sweep of the rod will assure that has taken place. In fast moving water like the Wasque rip, the lure should also be fished as slowly as patience will allow. At times of the strongest tidal pull, the retrieve can even be stopped occasionally as the current flowing against the tapered face will provide the lure action while allowing the lure to be pulled laterally over the bottom.

As for colors, I like the clear amber and the pink/white or brown/white blends, especially in the spring when the squid are in. As the season wears on, I tend to go with the old rule of black or black/purple on dark nights or plain white on moon lit nights or during the day. I also remove the rear set of trebles and add a single buck-tail. While many-experienced surf jocks scoff at that idea, I take a lot of fish on the single hook and the removal of the trebles provides additional protection to both the angler and the resource.

Finally, as a recent convert to braided line, you will find as I did that the use of braid will improve your hookup to hit ratio significantly. When squid are the bait of choice, many times the hits on a darter will be extremely subtle, as the fish appear to simply open their mouths and inhale the lure from behind. The sensitivity of braided line allows even the slightest of taps to be felt. When fishing darters it's important to set the hook on even the slightest of hits.

Stuffed Bluefish

By: Dave Nash

This recipe was from my Grandmother and is a great way to feed bluefish to people who otherwise might not touch it. The slightly larger blues also work perfectly with this recipe. It also works real well with Striped Bass. Don't hesitate to make plenty because not only will it disappear faster than you thought it would but it also warms up well.

Ingredients and preparation:

Two good sized bluefish or bass filets; skinned and dark meat removed (unless those you are feeding like it).

Stuffing mix (enough to make a layer about 3" thick between the two filets)

Lightly saute **3 cups coarsely chopped onions** and **1 cup chopped celery in olive oil**. Toss in **2-3 cloves minced garlic** and a **handful of parsley** when nearly cooked. When done melt $\frac{1}{2}$ **stick butter** and add the entire mixture to a **prepared stuffing mix**. I usually use Pepperidge farms cornbread stuffing mix because the flavors don't have an overwhelming poultry seasoning flavor. (If you make the bread mix from scratch, just do the regular toasted and cubed bread thing and season with salt and pepper). Add a dash of **salt**, a few good shakes of **black pepper**, a dash of **cayenne pepper**, and 1 tsp. **sugar** and mix everything together. Have a can of **chicken stock** on hand to moisten the stuffing mix until it just holds together.

Place **several strips of bacon** in the large baking dish you will be using to cook the fish and place in oven while it preheats to 350 degrees. Remove when the bacon just begins to melt so that it will be just slightly precooked and fully cooked when the fish is done.

Thinly slice one **lemon**, and have another one halved for juice.

Assembly:

Place one filet in a baking dish. Press stuffing mix together with your hands and set on top of the filet down the whole length about 3" thick. Set the other filet on top heading in the same direction. Sprinkle with lemon juice and place the bacon strips diagonally across the top of the filet; add the lemon slices on top. Sprinkle with a little **paprika**.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 30 to 40 minutes depending on thickness of fish.

Remove from oven, let cool for a few minutes, then slice diagonally and serve.

2005 MVSA Activities

In addition to giving back to our members in the form of our annual banquet and awards, summer picnic and pizza night, your dues money, fund raising efforts and active participation allowed us to give back to the community in the following ways.

- **We donated \$1,500 to the Martha's Vineyard Boys and Girls Club that was used to fund three fishing trips on board the Skipper party boat.**
- **We donated \$200 to the Red Stocking Fund for needy Island children.**
- **We spent a-day fishing with the Safe Haven Project Kids at Duarte's Pond.**
- **We participated in the Earth Day Beach Clean Up at Norton Point.**
- **We donated \$500 to support the Martha's Vineyard Rod & Gun Club Annual Kid's Trout Derby.**
- **We constructed and installed several additional 'spent fishing line' boxes on the Island's most popular fishing beaches to encourage the proper disposal and recycling of old fishing line.**
- **We donated \$1000 that was used to sponsor two fishing trips for Big Brothers/Big Sisters participants on board the Skipper.**
- **We donated \$500 and became a charter sponsor for the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Fishing Club.**
- **We maintained our "Courtesy Patrol" on the Islands OSV beaches.**
- **We lobbied for better management of Norton Point Beach.**