

Short Casts

Earth Day Beach Clean-Up

Once again, MVSA members turned out in big numbers to clean-up Norton Point Beach from the left fork to Metcalf's Hole. Participants of the Big Brothers Big Sisters program also joined MVSA members. The debris and trash collected was enough to overflow a dump truck and included more than fifty rusted fence stakes that had been carelessly discarded and ignored by County employees over the years. Thanks to the members that participated including Bob, Theresa, Matt, Chuck & Jenna Digiantommaso, Jeff Sayre, Will & Sue Geresy, Jim Cornwell, Peter Johnson, Bob Lane, Neil Patt, Walter Lison, Arnie & Maura Ziemian, Gary Mirando, Phil Horton, Cliff Snyder, Charlie Barr, Chuck Hodgkinson, and Dan and Versie Geary.

Safe Haven Trout Fishing

Thanks also to MVSA members that volunteered to work with AIDS affected children during their annual trip to Martha's Vineyard and Duarte's Pond. While a visiting Osprey hauled off the biggest trout, the kids and counselors had a great time catching catfish and yellow perch while interacting with volunteers including: Phil Cronin, Russ Lawrence, Tom Kowalski, Cooper Gilkes, Paula Sullivan, Bob Lane, Janet Messineo and Chris Israel, and Walter Lison.

MVSB & BF Derby

In an effort to reduce the mortality of False Albacore, the Derby Committee has announced a change in the rules for this year. Anglers will only be allowed to weigh-in a total of three fish for the entire Derby. Any angler that weighs in a fish that is under the minimum length will have that fish counted as one of the three. Efforts will also be made to raise angler awareness by highlighting the rules change on a full-page insert to the Derby program.

Events & Meetings

Annual MVSA Summer Picnic

The annual MVSA summer picnic will be held on Saturday July 9 at Bend in the Road Beach beginning at 5:00PM. Once again Phil Horton has graciously volunteered to be chief grill-master and organizer of the event that features his world-class ribs. So mark your calendars and plan to attend. The MVSA will provide the food, soft drinks condiments, etc. but donations of desserts and salads will be gratefully accepted. The event will also feature the Long Cast" championship and the popular 50/50 "cookie jar" raffle will also be held. We could use some help with grilling and clean up.

Phil Horton Hortonnh@comcast.com 508-693-6979

MVSA Chappy Shark Tournament

DA-Dum, Da-Dum!!! It's almost time to go back to East Beach for the third annual edition of the revised MVSA Shark Tournament. This year the event has been expanded to a full two weeks. The tournament will be held starting on Saturday, July 23rd at 6:00PM and run thru Sunday, August 7 at 8:00AM. The cookout and awards ceremony will be held at 4:00PM on Sunday at a site to be announced. Our resident shark hunter and last year's winner Tom Kieras is the man to beat. If you really want to get your blood going for the event, check out the photos of the nurse shark Tom posted on the forum page of our website. www.mvsurcasters.org The event is open to members only and the entry fee is \$15 and includes the cookout and awards ceremony. The fee for new members is \$50 and includes the entry fee, MVSA membership, the cookout and a MVSA hat and window sticker. Russ Lawrence 508-627-9670, captain.russ@marthasvineyardfishing.com or Jeff Sayre 508-693-4841, Jeff@flyfishingthevineyard.com

Boys & Girls Club Fishing Trip

We need volunteers to help with the Boys & Girls club fishing trips that will be held aboard the Skipper. The dates are July 11, 12 & 13. These trips are always a lot of fun and the kids are great. If you can help out, please contact Jeff Sayre at 508-693-4841, jeff@flyfishingthevineyard.com

Noteworthy

Member Russ Lawrence has the distinction of catching the first bluefish of the year in Vineyard waters. Russ caught the 4.0 fish on May 4 while out fishing with Water Lison at Wasque Point.

The day after, member George Gomez of Chappaquiddick caught the club's first "keeper" striper of the year. The 29" fish was also caught at Wasque Point.

Congratulations to members Dan Williams, Ron Domurat and Janet Messineo for sweeping the top three places of the shore bluefish division of the Memorial Day Tournament held by Dick's Bait & Tackle. Dan's winning fish was 9.0 lbs, followed by Ron's 7.7 lb fish and Janet was third with a 7.2 lb fish. Charlie Barr, Chuck Hodgkinson and Phil Horton also spent time on the leader board during the weekend long event.

In House Derby Standings

The year must be off to a slow start! These are all the entries we have. Every division is still wide open, so start fishing and get your entry form in to Paul Schultz before the 5th of the following month.

All Tackle Shore Striped Bass Release

Ron Domurat 44 ½"
Paul Apuzzo 43"
Mark Wrabel 41"

Junior All Tackle-Shore Bluefish

Jake Gubitose 6.1 lbs.

Beach Report

It's amazing that a few small birds can accomplish what three consecutive weekend Nor'easters could not--*close the beaches!!*

The County Beach at Norton's Point has two Piping Plover nests and was closed on June 25 and will remain closed until the birds fledge in late July or early August. Likewise for most of East Beach on Chappy where there are four piping plover nests-three on, or in back of East Beach, and one at the western end of Wasque by the Swan Pond. East Beach is currently closed to OSV traffic from approximately ¼ mile south of Dike Bridge to Wasque Point. The senior parking lot at Wasque is also off limits as in addition to the bird nests, the area suffered beach erosion. Dave Belcher is going to attempt to re-open that area after the plovers disappear. The remainder of the Trustees property at Cape Poge

remains open with the exception of Arruda Point which suffered a great deal of beach erosion and is currently closed to vehicle traffic. The beach there has started to rebuild but is severely slanted from the dune to the surf's edge. The area under the lighthouse also suffered severe beach erosion and several large boulders and other obstacles have been exposed. Driving there is hazardous and care should be taken.

Finally, it appears as though the MVSA efforts over the winter went for naught as the County recently announced that management of the Norton Point Beach will be turned over to the Dukes County Sheriff's Dept. There is no word on when or even if, the air inflations station will be installed. The MVSA Committee as well as other interested parties had hoped the County would somehow get the Trustees of the Reservations involved in the management of Norton's Point. Regrettably, it now appears unlikely to happen in the very near future.

What's on the Line???

Annual MVSA Picnic-July 9, 2005, 5:00PM-Bend in the Road Beach, Edgartown

Phil Horton, 508-693-6979, hortonnh@comcast.com

Boys & Girls Club Skipper Fishing Trips-July 11,12, 13, 9:00AM-Skipper Dock, Oak Bluffs. Jeff Sayre, 508-693-4841, jeff@flyfishingthevineyard.com

MVSA Chappy Beach Shark Tournament, 6:00PM-Saturday, July 23, 2005-Sunday August 7, 2005-8:00AM.

Russ Lawrence, 508-627-9670, captain.russ@marthasvineyardfishing.com
Jeff Sayre, 508-693-4841, jeff@flyfishingthevineyard.com

60th Annual Martha's Vineyard Striped Bass & Bluefish Derby

12:01AM Sunday, September 11, 2005-Saturday, October 15, 2005, 10:00PM.

Fishing Lobsterville

By: Phil Cronin

Lobsterville in June; a Fly Fisher's Delight

Most everyone who fishes the fly on the Vineyard loves Lobsterville in June. In fact, if you make the journey up island for the sunset bite you may find yourself turning away after discovering there's no place to park. It's sad but true for many are the disappointed anglers who find this out for themselves. The answer to this dilemma is quite simple – either get there very early or very, very late!

I have found that it's extremely hard to gauge when Lobsterville will turn on in June. One year it's early in the month and another year it's the last couple of weeks. The one thing we can all be sure of is that it will turn on and with a vengeance. Last year was a late bloomer for the sand eel slurping linesiders. We started probing the nighttime dropping tide early in the month only to find very little feeding action and a full moon. As the night sky darkened with diminished moon-light, things began to percolate towards the middle of the month. The darker nights were during the weeks ending June 19th and 26th and a late night falling tide helped bring things to a head. Sand eels were prolific and sometimes made enticing a feeding striper with an imitation almost impossible. The patient fly angler usually managed to trick a few decent sized bass.

The best way to find out what works on these finicky feeders of Lobsterville is to seek the expertise of others. I smartened up years ago after many fishless nights despite having been knee-deep in sand eels and surrounded by a chorus of pops and slurps caused by feeding bass. Several of my “fishing buddies” had unlocked the secret of the June bite at Lobsterville years ago and after watching them haul in fish after fish I swallowed my pride and asked for their help. The answer was this:

“Fish Lobsterville when the moon is in recess, the tide is dropping, and the fog is the thickest. Use a floating Vineyard sand eel pattern on a floating fly line. Retrieve in a very short, jerky motion, pausing occasionally for several seconds. Face west, bow from the hips three times in slow succession, and say a prayer to the fish gods”.

If you love catching a well fed “keeper” bass on the fly, do yourself a favor and follow the above prescription to the letter. It worked for me.

A spin fisherman’s take on Lobsterville.

First, follow the above advice with regard to the parking, tides and especially the moon phase and weather conditions. Lobsterville is not a good place to fish when the moon is bright!

I like to use my light weight 7’ rod and my favorite lure is a clear, 6” broken-back bomber tied direct with a loop knot, at the end of a piece of 30”-36” 40lb fluorocarbon leader. The leader is tied to the running line with a barrel swivel. Off the bottom end of the swivel, I tie a shorter piece of lighter weight fluorocarbon. Tied to the end of the shorter line is a black Red Gill teaser or similar long black fly. I cast in the direction the current is running and retrieve extremely slow, even stopping occasionally. Long casts are not necessary as the fish are usually right at your feet. You might even try casting almost parallel to the beach if you have the room. You will find that on some nights, the fish will hit nothing but the teaser while on others, the lure is all they want. Other successful Lobsterville sharpies do very well there with black Spofford or Super Strike needlefish, black Sluggo’s, or small black Yo-Zuri crystal minnows. Whatever you decide to use, fish with a fairly light drag and hang on, as stripers to 30lbs are not unusual there.

One final point! Most of us turn away from Lobsterville after June, but intelligence sources indicate last year had some fantastic late night fishing right through July. And don’t be surprised if a bonus keeper size fluke takes your lure or fly, as late June and early July will find fluke doing their best trout imitations at dusk.

A Shark Story

The night was dark, foggy and very humid. I started fishing around 9:30PM with a good size chunk of bunker and a six-ounce pyramid sinker tied to a three foot piece of 120lb wire and 200 yds of newly spooled 30lb test. There were six of us spread out along East Beach on Chappy. I was out in front of the Dike Bridge. I hammered the sand spike deep in the sand, tossed the bait out, set the rod in the spike, sat down, and expecting a long wait for a hit, lit a cigar. I hadn’t had the line in the water for more than five minutes when my old white 11’ Lamiglas “pool cue” rod bent over in the spike. I grabbed the rod and rammed the hook home a few times while the line peeled off slowly the entire time. After the set I started to follow the fish down the beach toward the Poge lighthouse as the fish continued to take line at about a 30-degree angle away from me. I then realized that I had something very large and was going to be ill equipped to land this fish without any help, especially if it took me a good distance down the beach. I loosened the drag a little more and moved backward to my car to retrieve a pair of leather gloves. My thinking was that if I could at least get the fish in the wash, the gloves would enable me to grab the leader and haul it up by hand. I then pointed the rod at the fish, put the reel between my legs, put my cigar down,

took off my sweatshirt, picked up my cigar, tightened the drag a little and started down the beach again. I had gone about thirty yards when the line finally stopped peeling off the reel. By this time I guessed I was down at least a 100 yds of line. I hauled back on the fish but was unable to move it even a foot. Also, because of the tremendous amount of pressure against the bail and spool, it was very difficult to even turn the crank on the reel. I continued down the beach, all the while keeping heavy pressure against the fish and trying my best to gain some line, but to no avail as the fish continued to keep just a little ahead of me, taking more line than I was able to muscle in. It then made a second strong slow run and almost took the rest of what remained on the spool. I shined my neck light on the reel and could see the bottom of the spool and the knot. But it slowed again so I was able to gain back about thirty yards by repeatedly walking toward the water and backing up to the crest of the beach. By this time the battle had been going on for almost twenty minutes. I was tired and soaking wet from the effort and was still losing ground to the fish. I had hoped that by this time it would have tired just a little as between those long slow runs I would occasionally stop and haul back on the rod putting as much pressure on as I dared, but the fish never really budged. During this entire time I never felt a headshake or any other kind of movement. Finally, the "creature" started another slow run, always keeping ahead of me and maintaining that 30-degree angle away from me. This time I was down to the knot on the spool. I continued down the beach for a while still trying to crank some line back without any luck. I had about had it. I had been on for twenty five minutes, at least a quarter of a mile down the beach, out of line and beginning to think that maybe I had a huge barn door skate rather than a shark. I'm thinking that if twenty five minutes of constant heavy pressure had not tired or turned the fish, there was no way I was ever going to retrieve 200 yards of line even if the fish did finally tire. I pointed the rod at the fish, backed up the beach to the dune and broke it off.

As I walked dejectedly back to the car, Russ Lawrence, the night beach ranger was walking toward me shinning his light at the surf line. He saw the empty chair, sweatshirt, and open car doors and was concerned. As we got back to the car, we noticed some lights up the beach so we jumped in the truck and drove up to investigate. Steve Purcell was landing a brown shark and his buddy Ed Willoughby was up to his waist in the water ready to gaff the shark. They beached the fish, which was 66" long and estimated the weight at over 100lbs.

Friday night I went back out again but could manage only one big dog fish for my efforts, but two more sharks, one 61" and one 56", were taken that night along with a ten pound bluefish. The fish were tagged and released the fish and it was good to be a part of that effort. The eventual winner came Saturday night when Tom Kieras caught and landed a heavy 73" female brown shark that he estimated weighed over 120lbs. During the weeklong event, a total of five brown sharks were landed. Two were taken for table fare, one released outright and two released with National Marine Fisheries Service tags.

I'll never know what I had on that night but I do know this-it was a very big animal. The fact that I didn't feel a lot of movement only that long slow crawl leads me to believe it was a very big shark that was barely moving along the bottom. It probably had no clue it was even hooked. We had Greg Skomal, the MA DMF shark biologist at our awards ceremony. He speculated that it could have been a very big brown shark, a skate, or perhaps even a big dusky that have been known to frequent this area. Some guys thought I gave up a little early. I don't think so! They didn't have the rod in their hands. But other guys have fought sharks for over an hour and landed them. Tom Kieras recently landed a 300lb Nurse Shark that he fought for over three hours. But in my mind I felt there was no way I was ever going to retrieve 200 yds of 30 lb test line if I hadn't gained an inch in twenty-five minutes. You can form your own opinion. And by the way-my Shimano Bait Runner is cooked!

I've talked with a number of guys who have fished for sharks from the beach. Most tell me that they hooked and lost a number of them before they finally put one on the beach. That made me feel just a little bit better about the ordeal but I think about it often. I saw the way other sharks were fought and landed and nothing I saw compared to what I encountered. One thing I will do next time I go shark fishing is spool up with 80lb braid. That's what the veteran surf shark anglers do. They let the fish make the first run, sock down the drag, and then heave and haul.

I'll tell you one thing, in thirty plus years of fishing the suds, I sometimes think that I had about run out of new thrills but this was something very different. Shark fishing from the surf is exciting as hell whether you or someone else catches the fish. I can't wait for this year's tournament!

You can check out some photos on our MVSA web site at www.mvsurfcasters.org

2005 Size Chart-What Will You Catch??

If you believe the science, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission tells us there are over 55,000,000 striped bass in the ocean. That means your odds of catching stripers are better than anytime since they began keeping records. The numbers also indicate that your chance of catching a trophy fish are also good as the large spawning classes since the crash of the early eighties grows to full maturity. The chart below should give you a pretty good idea of where we are and what we can expect in the future. (Note: The Young of the Year (YOY) index is determined by the average number of striped bass fry that are netted at various sampling sites along spawning areas in Chesapeake Bay. A YOY index of 13 is considered healthy!

89 year-class, **(YOY index 26)** 45 to 48 inches, 33 to 50lbs.
93 year class, **(YOY index 38)** 40 to 44 inches, 21 to 32lbs.
94 year class, **(YOY index 25)** 36-40 inches, 16 to 20lbs.
96 year class, **(YOY index 58) (the largest ever recorded)** 33-35 inches, 13-16lbs.
97 year class, **(YOY index 12)** 32 inches, 12lbs.
98 year class, **(YOY index 18)** 28 inches, 8 lbs.
99 year class, **(YOY index 17)** 26" 6lbs.
00 year class, **(YOY index 23)** 23".
01 year class, **(YOY index 40)** 20"
02 year class, **(YOY index 6)** 16"
03 year class, **(YOY index 35)** 12"

Here is a very accurate and tried and true formula for determining the weight of a released fish:

Measure the length of the fish from the tip of it's tail to the very end of it's lower jaw. (The longest possible length) Then measure the girth around at its widest point. Multiply the girth-squared times the length and then divide the figure by 800. The remainder will be the weight of the fish.