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Fish On! magazine is published by the Ocean City Fishing Center in partnership with Cabin Fever Communications of Norfolk, Virginia.

Creative design and photography is produced by Cabin Fever Communications, a full service marketing firm specializing in publications, advertising, promotions, photography, public relations, strategic planning and events.



2025 Fishing Season

Features, Photos & Good Stories

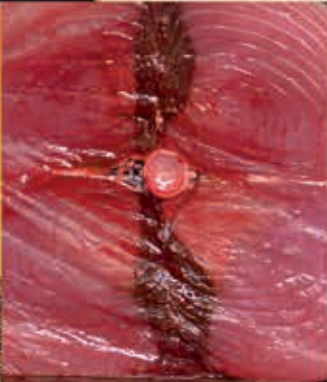
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FISH ON!

Ocean City, Maryland's ■ Tournament Source



Tournaments & Fishing

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June 2025

- ☐ **3RD ANNUAL BATTLE OF THE BUCKLES TOURNAMENT**
May 29 - May 31 | Sunset Marina | 410-213-9600
- ☐ **5TH ANNUAL TUNAS AND TIARA'S TOURNAMENT**
June 13 - June 14 | Ocean City Fishing Center | 410-213-1121
- ☐ **46TH ANNUAL SMALL BOAT TOURNAMENT**
June 21 - 22 | Ocean City Marlin Club | 410-213-1613
- ☐ **7TH ANNUAL FISH N PADDLE TOURNAMENT**
June 21 - June 22 | Atlantic Tackle | 410-213-0325

July 2025

- ☐ **43RD ANNUAL CANYON KICK-OFF**
July 4 - July 6 | Ocean City Marlin Club | 410-213-1613
- ☐ **7TH ANNUAL MID-ATLANTIC CUP BLUE MARLIN TOURNAMENT**
July 4 | Cape May & Sunset Marina | 609-884-2400
- ☐ **38TH ANN. OCEAN CITY TUNA TOURNAMENT**
July 10 - July 13 | Ocean City Fishing Center | 410-213-1121
- ☐ **5TH ANNUAL JIMMY JOHNSON QUEST FOR THE RING CHAMPIONSHIP**
July 13 - July 19 | Sunset Marina | 410-213-9600

- ☐ **21ST ANNUAL MARLIN CLUB KID'S CLASSIC**
July 19 - July 20 | Ocean City Marlin Club | 410-213-1613
- ☐ **12TH ANNUAL BIG FISH CLASSIC TOURNAMENT**
July 25 - July 27 | Talbot Street Peir | 410-213-0325

August 2025

- ☐ **3RD ANNUAL MARLINS FOR MASON**
Aug 1 - Aug 2 | Ocean City Marlin Club | 609-377-0706
- ☐ **17TH ANNUAL MARLIN CLUB HEELS & REELS LADIES TOURNAMENT**
Aug 1 - Aug 2 | Ocean City Marlin Club | 410-213-1613

- ☐ **52ND ANNUAL WHITE MARLIN OPEN**
August 4 - August 8 | Harbour Island Marina | 410-289-9229
- ☐ **32ND ANNUAL CAPT. STEVE HARMAN'S POOR GIRL'S OPEN**
August 14 - August 16 | Bahia Marina | 410-289-7438
- ☐ **34TH ANNUAL MID-ATLANTIC**
August 18 - 22 | Cape May & Sunset Marina | 609-884-2400



THE BEACHES OF OCEAN CITY

During the summer, anglers are allowed to surf fish before 10am and after 5:30pm (or when the lifeguards are off-duty). Off-Season, anglers are allowed all day. Use mullet for bluefish, squid for sharks and trout, bloodworms or Fishbites for spot and whiting, lures, live eels or spot for stripers.

HOMER GUDELSKY PARK

Traveling west over the Route 50 Bridge, make a left at Golf Course Road (next to Royal Farms) and make the next immediate left onto Old Bridge Road. Beach with rocks along the shore. Cast shiners and squid for flounder, worms or Fishbites for sea bass and spot, lures for blues, live eels or spot for stripers.

OCEAN CITY INLET

Located at the southernmost end of Ocean City. Use lures for bluefish, trout, and striper, sandfleas for tautog, and squid, mullet or shiners for flounder.

ROUTE 50 BRIDGE

Located one block south of 1st Street. Excellent flounder fishing with frozen shiners. Worms or Fishbites used for spot and other small fish. Blues hit lures or squid. Night fishing is generally good working lures beneath the lights. Also, good crabbing location using traps.

2ND THRU 4TH STREET BULKHEAD

Located on the bayside. Use shiners and squid for flounder, bluefish and sea bass. Blood worms or Fishbites for spot, sand fleas or sectioned green crabs for tautog.

CONVENTION HALL

Bulkhead and pier behind Convention Hall at 40th Street. Good crabbing and fair fishing on the high tide. Use live minnows for flounder, bloodworms or Fishbites for spot and croaker.

September 2025

2ND ANNUAL LABOR DAY INVITATIONAL
August 29 - 31 | Ocean City Marlin Club | 410-213-1613

20TH ANNUAL FLOUNDER POUNDER
September 7 | Bahia Marina | 410-289-7473

47TH ANNUAL CHALLENGE CUP INVITATIONAL
Sept 11 - 13 | Cape May Marlin & Tuna Club | 609-884-1006

24TH ANNUAL SPOT TOURNAMENT
September 13 | Ocean City Fishing Center | 410-213-1121

October 2025

46TH ANNUAL MID-ATLANTIC
SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT
October 4 - 6 | Ocean City, MD | 410-251-2203

9TH ANNUAL OCEAN CITY INSHORE
CLASSIC TOURNAMENT
October 4 - 5 | Atlantic Tackle | 410-213-0421

2025 Maryland Citation Requirements

ALBACORE – LONGFIN

• Citation Size 36"

ALBACORE – FALSE

• Citation Size 24"

AMBERJACK

• Citation Size 45"

ATLANTIC SPADEFISH

• Citation Size 24"

BASS – STRIPED

• Citation Size 40"

BLUEFISH

• Citation Size 34"

COBIA

• Citation Size 44"

CROAKER

• Citation Size 18"

DOLPHIN

• Citation Size 45"

SHARK – BLUE **

• Citation Size Any Size

SHARK – HAMMERHEAD **

• Citation Size Any Size

SHARK – MAKO **

• Citation Size Any Size

SHARK – SAND TIGER **

• Citation Size Any Size

SHARK – THRESHER **

• Citation Size Any Size

SHARK – TIGER **

• Citation Size Any Size

SHEEPSHEAD

• Citation Size 20"

SPANISH MACKEREL

• Citation Size 22"

SPOT

• Citation Size 12"

DRUM – BLACK

• Citation Size 48"

DRUM – RED **

• Citation Size Any Size

FLOUNDER

• Citation Size 24"

KING MACKEREL

• Citation Size 40"

MARLIN – BLUE **

• Citation Size Any Size

MARLIN – WHITE **

• Citation Size Any Size

NORTHERN WHITING (KINGFISH)

• Citation Size 14"

SAILFISH **

• Citation Size Any Size

SEABASS

• Citation Size 20"

SWORDFISH **

• Citation Size Any Size

TAUTOG

• Citation Size 24"

TUNA – BIGEYE *

• Citation Size 60"

TUNA – BLACKFIN *

• Citation Size 30"

TUNA – BLUEFIN *

• Citation Size 55"

TUNA – YELLOWFIN *

• Citation Size 50"

WAHOO

• Citation Size 60"

WEAKFISH

• Citation Size 24"

** Only released fish are eligible.

* Use curved fork length measurements for Tuna.

Charter Fleet of O.C.

Ocean City Fishing Center

12940 Inlet Isle Lane | Ocean City, MD 21842 | 410.213.1121

Sunset Marina

12911 Sunset Ave. | Ocean City, MD 21842 | 410.213.9600

Fisherman's Marina

12806 Sunset Ave. | Ocean City, MD 21842 | 410.213.9600



charter fishing / ocean city



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42' ALL IN Captain David Midgett

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50' BLUE RUNNER Captain Mark Bowen

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302.379.1629

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43' FINATIC Captain Mark Malamphy

Finatic is a 43' Viking powered by twin Caterpillar diesel engines. A salon with AC/heat, new electronics, and sofa seating comfortably accommodates up to six anglers. Capt. Mark has been fishing off Ocean City and Virginia for over 25 years and specializes in tuna, marlin, mahi, wahoo, tilefish, sharks, swordfish and sea bass fishing.

www.FinaticSportfishing.com

443.350.7364

Ocean City Fishing Center



tuna fish / white marlin

dolphin / blue marlin



58'

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Captain Ryan Freese
Captain Pat Svhela

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Sunset Marina

37'

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Fisherman's Marina

58'

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Captain Mark Hoos

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410.456.7765
Sunset Marina

58'

PUMPIN HARD
Captain Mike Burt

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65'

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38'

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Capt. Casey Anderson

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Fisherman's Marina



wahoo / swordfish

yellowfin / big eye



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www.ZipperSportfishing.com
443-986-4968
Sunset Marina

OC FISHING CENTER 12940 Inlet Isle Ln Ocean City, MD 21842

The **Ocean City Fishing Center** in Maryland is a premier marina offering over 160 slips, the largest charter fishing fleet in town, and amenities such as a bait and tackle shop, fish cleaning station, and on-site dining at Micky Fins Dockside Bar & Grill.

www.OcFishing.com
410.213.1121

SUNSET MARINA 12911 Sunset Ave Ocean City, MD 21842

Sunset Marina is a premier full-service marina resort offering 204 surge-free slips, direct access to the Atlantic Ocean, and top-tier amenities including two swimming pools, a fitness center, and the award-winning Sunset Grille restaurant.

www.OcSunsetMarina.com
410.213.9600

The images featured in this section are courtesy of Sport Fish of the Atlantic. Copies of this book are available in both marinas at Sunset Provisions and the Ocean City Fishing Center.



BLUE MARLIN [*Makaira Nigricans*]

- Body is blue-black above, with a silvery white underside
- Usually several vertical stripes are noticeable
- Pointed dorsal fin curves sharply downward
- Females will commonly weigh over 1190 lbs
- Males rarely exceed 353 lbs. in weight
- It has a long stout bill



SWORDFISH [*Xiphias Gladius*]

- Long, flat bill, streamlined physique
- Reach a maximum size of 177 inches and 1,400 lbs
- Color is mostly dark brown to purple, with whitish undersides
- High, crescent-shaped dorsal fin and broadly forked tail
- Pectoral fins are also large and crescent shaped



ALBACORE TUNA [*Thunnus Alalunga*]

- Very long pectoral fins
- Caudal fin with narrow white margin
- Metallic, dark-blue above, silvery-gray sides



ATLANTIC BONITO [*Sarda Sarda*]

- Dark stripes from head to caudal fin
- Lateral line noticeably wavy
- Finlets dusky



LongBILL SPEARFISH [*Tetrapturus Pflueferi*]

- Color of body dark blue shading to silvery white underneath
- The bill is actually quite short compared to that of the White Marlin
- Dorsal fin is pointed at the front but dips slightly and remains high for its full length
- They are pelagic and feed at or near the surface
- Rarely lives past 4 or 5 years



HATCHET MARLIN [*Tetrapturus*]

- May be a variant of the White Marlin
- Scales are round, whereas those of the other Marlins are pointed
- Coloration is similar to the other Marlins, but it is closer to the White than to the Blue in body proportions
- Name comes from the dorsal fin, which does not dip in the manner of the Blue and White but tapers gradually to the rear



BIGEYE TUNA [*Thunnus Obeses*]

- Body stocky and robust
- Large eyes in adults
- Mid length pectoral fin
- Finlets bright yellow with broad black margins



BLACKFIN TUNA [*Thunnus Atlanticus*]

- Pectoral fins moderately long
- Second dorsal and anal fins have silver luster
- Bluish-black above silvery-gray sides and belly



SAILFISH [*Istiophorus Albicans*]

- Blue to gray in color
- Dorsal fin, which often stretches the entire length of the back, is characteristic of a sail
- Fastest fish in the sea
- Known for their incredible jumps



WHITE MARLIN [*Tetrapturus Albidus*]

- Dark blue body to chocolate brown, shading to silvery white underbelly
- Noticeable spots on dorsal fin
- Upper jaw elongated in shape of spear
- Lateral line curved above pectoral fin then going in straight line to base of tail
- Average size is 45 to 65 lbs. with females reaching relatively larger sizes



BLUEFIN TUNA [*Thunnus Thynnus*]

- Body stocky and robust
- Caudal keel black in adults
- Short pectoral fins
- Finlets yellow with narrow black margins



LITTLE TUNNY [*False Albacore*]

- Body with scattered dark spots above lateral line
- Pectoral fins very short and broad
- Belly without dark stripes



SKIPJACK TUNA [*Katsuwonus Pelamis*]

- Belly features 4-6 prominent dark stripes
- Dark purplish-blue, silver lower sides and belly
- Pectoral and pelvic fins very short and broad
- Finlets dusky



YELLOWFIN TUNA [*Thunnus Albacares*]

- Second dorsal fin and anal fins bright yellow
- Finlets lemon-yellow with narrow black margins
- Dark blue above, silvery-gray sides and belly
- More slender than bluefin or bigeye tunas



SCALLOPED HAMMERHEAD [*Sphyma Lewini*]

- Front edge of hammer is slightly rounded
- Primarily lives in warm temperate and tropical coastal waters
- Pectoral fin has dark tip on underside
- Often seen during the day in big schools
- Feeds primarily on fish such as sardines, mackerel, and herring



SHORTFIN MAKO [*Isurus Oxyrinchus*]

- Incredibly fast swimmers with superior lateral movements
- In average full-grown length of 6 to 8 feet
- Weigh up to 1750 lbs
- Bluish black and white underside
- Sleek spindle shaped shark with a long conical snout



BLUE SHARK [*Prionace Glauca*]

- Generally lethargic, they are capable of moving very quickly as needed
- Top of the body is deep blue, lighter on the sides, and the underside is white
- Pointed snout and extra-long dorsal fins
- Typical weight is 300 lbs to 400 lbs
- Prefer cooler waters



DUSKY SHARK [*Carcharhinus Obscurus*]

- Long streamlined body that is brown or gray above and white below
- First dorsal fin originates over or near the free rear tips of the pectoral fins
- There is a low ridge between the dorsal fins
- On the side of the body a stripe can be seen from the pelvic fins to the head
- Average size is about 8 ft total length and 400 lbs



SMOOTH HAMMERHEAD [*Sphyrna Zygaena*]

- Head resembles more of an ax rather than the classic hammer
- Steeply ascending first dorsal fin which tapers into a sickle form at the back
- Primary color on the top is olive green or dark gray-brown and white underneath
- Prefer waters relatively close to shore
- Teeth are similar in both the upper and lower jaws, are triangular and smooth edged



SPINNER SHARK [*Caracharhinus Brevipinna*]

- Slender shark with a long, narrow, pointed snout, long gill slits and small, narrow-cusped teeth
- Coloration is grey above, white below, with a conspicuous white band on its sides
- Black-tipped fins
- Capable of vertical spinning leaps out of the water as a feeding technique



GREAT WHITE SHARK [*Charcharodon Carcharias*]

- Found in coastal surface waters in all major oceans
- Reaching lengths of more than 20 ft and weighing up to 5,000 lbs
- Shape is much like the Mako
- Robust large conical-shaped snout
- Almost the same size upper and lower lobes on the tail fin
- White underside and a grey dorsal area.



NURSE SHARK [*Ginglymostoma Cirratum*]

- Common indoor bottom-dwelling shark
- Underslung mouth and barbells at the nostrils
- Light yellowish-brown to dark brown, with or without small dark spots
- Non-migratory-adapts to cold by becoming even less active



THRESHER SHARK [*Alopias Vulpinus*]

- Large, thresher-like tail or caudal fins
- Tail is used as a weapon to stun prey
- Small dorsal fin and large, recurved pectoral fins
- Color ranges from brownish, bluish or purplish gray dorsally with lighter shades ventrally
- May live for 20 years or more



TIGER SHARK [*Galeocerdo Cuvieri*]

- Size averages 11 ft. to 14 ft. and weighs 850 to 2000 lbs
- Dark stripes down its body, which fade as the shark matures
- Skin can typically range from a blue to green hue to light with a white or light yellow underbelly
- The second largest predatory shark other than the great white
- Head is somewhat wedge-shaped



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4.8 STARS



ON GOOGLE

The team at The Mortgage Link was fantastic! Communication was exceptional and the process was clear and smooth. Their online tools were really helpful and user-friendly. The team was very responsive when I had any questions. I highly recommend them!

- Domonique S.

**CALL US TO
CATCH A
GREAT RATE!**

Wishing all of the anglers and boats a safe tournament and, of course, tight lines. Go, Christine Marie!



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fish

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RESORT & MARINA



2026
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NEW CONSTRUCTION

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Terrified

Captain Ritchie Howell was running the C-Jam that day and ordered everyone into the cabin as we were going through a very nasty storm. I decided to creep out under the overhang in hopes to get a really cool shot of the stormy conditions and was able to get a shot of a lifetime. The Haphazard was coming up a wave when a bolt of lightning came down from the heavens. I decided not to push my luck and headed in afterward.

Harry R. Hindmarsh | Photographer



Tournament Fishing *in Stormy* WEATHER

GEARING UP FOR ROUGH DAYS

Photos and Story by | Harry R. Hindmarsh

It's TOURNAMENT TIME! You have the boat, the team, the time off, and you're ready to go. Then, the week before the event, you see the weather report: Wind, rain, and waves. What do you do when money is on the line?

When the wind howls and the swells rise, only the most determined anglers remain on the water—and that grit was on full display at last year's Ocean City Tuna Tournament. Battling rough seas and unpredictable weather, competitors pushed their limits in pursuit of glory and big game beneath the waves. The unforgiving conditions tested both seamanship and strategy, transforming the tournament into not just a contest of skill, but a true measure of resilience. Yet, despite nature's challenges, the spirit of the sport endured, and the docks buzzed with tales of hard-won catches and near misses.

Every July, boats from across the East Coast converge on Ocean City, Maryland, for one of the most prestigious events in sportfishing: the Ocean City Tuna Tournament. Known for its high-stakes payouts, adrenaline-pumping action, and deep-rooted camaraderie, the tournament attracts both seasoned captains and ambitious newcomers. But in recent years, what has set certain tournaments apart has not just been the size of the tuna—but the size of the waves.

Fishing in rough offshore conditions is not for the faint of heart. It demands physical endurance, technical mastery, and nerves of steel. Yet, paradoxically, many of the most successful teams welcome these harsh elements. While calm days offer comfort and visibility, it's the stormy, choppy conditions that often yield the biggest catches. During the Ocean City Tuna Tournament, when the weather takes a turn, true anglers know it might just be the break they need—not only for an edge over more cautious competitors but because rough seas can kickstart the kind of underwater feeding frenzy that tournament dreams are made of.





Why Rough Weather Can Mean Better Fishing

To the uninitiated, it may seem counterintuitive that big fish bite better when the weather worsens. But for tuna hunters, it's a well-known truth. Rough conditions can disrupt bait patterns and churn up nutrients from deeper waters, drawing schools of baitfish to the surface. This, in turn, attracts predatory species like yellowfin, bluefin, and bigeye tuna, creating a prime opportunity for anglers.

"In tougher conditions, the tuna are often more aggressive and less cautious," says Captain Jeremy Blunt, a long-time veteran of the Ocean City Tuna Tournaments. "They're feeding hard and fast. The turbulence masks our lines and lures better, and that makes it easier to hook the big ones."

Tuna, particularly bigeye, are notorious for their elusive and erratic feeding patterns. Calm, sunny days can scatter schools and push them deeper into cooler, darker water layers, making them harder to find and catch. But when the skies cloud over and the swell builds, anglers often find that tuna feed more openly and are more responsive to trolling spreads. In essence, rough conditions compress the food chain and bring the action closer to the surface.

This phenomenon isn't just anecdotal. Studies on pelagic behavior have confirmed that many offshore gamefish respond to barometric pressure changes and rougher surface conditions by becoming more active feeders. For tournament anglers with limited fishing windows, this behavior can turn a stormy day into a lucrative one.

The 2024 Tournament: A Battle Against the Elements

During the 2024 Ocean City Tuna Tournament, competitors were met with just such a challenge. With steady winds exceeding 20 knots and four-to-six-foot seas offshore, conditions were anything but ideal. Several teams opted to sit out a day, hedging their bets on improved weather. But those who ventured out were rewarded with some explosive fishing.



Team Wrecker hooked a 194.5 pound bigeye tuna, battling both the fish and the conditions for nearly an hour. “It was like being in a washing machine out there,” said Captain Jeremy Blunt. “But the bite was red-hot. You just had to hold on and keep lines tight.”

Their gamble paid off. That catch helped secure a top placement and over \$198,475 in prize money. Similar stories echoed up and down the weigh-in docks—teams who endured the chop, adjusted their tactics, and came home heavy.

Balancing Risk and Reward

But fishing in rough seas is not without serious risks. The Ocean City Tuna Tournament requires all participating vessels to be seaworthy and mandates strict safety regulations. However, the responsibility ultimately lies with captains and crews to make informed decisions about when to fish and when to stay docked.

“The ocean doesn’t care if you’re in a tournament,” says Captain Randy Butler, who has been running offshore charters for over 20 years. “No fish is worth your life. You need to know your boat, know your crew’s limits, and have safety protocols drilled into muscle memory.”

Preparation is everything when dealing with heavy seas. That means checking and double-checking safety gear before leaving the marina: life jackets for all aboard, emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs), flares, first-aid kits, and satellite communication devices. It also

means ensuring bilge pumps are operational, securing all gear to prevent injury or damage, and maintaining constant situational awareness on deck.

One often-overlooked aspect is the physical toll rough weather can take on the crew. Constant movement, wet decks, and the strain of fighting large fish can lead to fatigue or accidents. Captains must make sure their team is hydrated, alert, and in good health before setting off.

“A good crew is a prepared crew,” says Butler. “You have to be able to work together and communicate clearly, especially when everything’s moving.”

Adaptation Is Key

Success in rough conditions often hinges on the ability to adapt quickly. Tuna spreads may need to be adjusted to prevent tangling in heavy chop. Speeds must be modulated for safety and lure effectiveness. Even fishing strategy—such as targeting temperature breaks or using specific trolling patterns—may need to shift depending on how the weather is affecting the fish.

Electronics, too, play a vital role. Modern offshore boats are equipped with sonar, GPS, radar, and satellite overlays that can help identify productive water and steer around the worst weather. During the tournament, teams that leveraged this technology were able to stay ahead of squalls and optimize their time in the strike zone.

“

Each wave that crashes over the bow is a test - and every tuna hauled aboard is proof we passed.

”

Randy Butler | Captain, REBEL

And sometimes, simplicity is the best strategy. In big seas, fewer lines can mean fewer headaches. Some captains opt to run just three or four rods instead of a full spread, minimizing tangles and focusing on clean presentation.

A Test of Seamanship and Spirit

There's something undeniably primal about heading offshore when the weather is unforgiving. For many tournament anglers, it's as much about proving themselves against nature as it is about landing the winning fish.

“The Ocean City Tuna Tournament is about more than just big checks,” says tournament director Brian Tinkler. “It's about grit. It's about respecting the ocean and testing your limits. And when the conditions are tough, that spirit shines through.”

Spectators, too, are drawn to the drama. Crowds gather at the weigh-in station not just to see the giant tuna, but to hear the stories of how they were caught—stories filled with salt spray, broken gear, near misses, and teamwork under pressure.

The OCTT is one of the few events that has some-

thing for everyone. For spectators, teams on lay-days, and teams that opted out because of weather have much to do on site. The tent provides food and drinks and there is a boat show on site for guests to enjoy. There are over a dozen vendors selling jewelry, shirts, glasses, art and more daily.

The 2024 tournament exemplified that spirit. With high winds, rough seas, and unpredictable bite patterns, it was a crucible for every captain and crew that chose to compete. And while not every team came back with a prize-winning fish, all returned with a deeper respect for the ocean—and for the sport they love.

Fishing offshore in rough conditions is not about bravado; it's about calculated risk, preparation, and respect for the elements. During the Ocean City Tuna Tournament, those who understand and embrace this balance often find themselves not just surviving the conditions, but thriving in them. Rough seas don't just test your gear—they test your resolve. And for those who rise to the challenge, the rewards are more than just monetary—they're the kind of hard-earned satisfaction that only comes from fishing on the edge. 🐟



The Shimano logo is displayed in a bold, blue, sans-serif font against a dark background.

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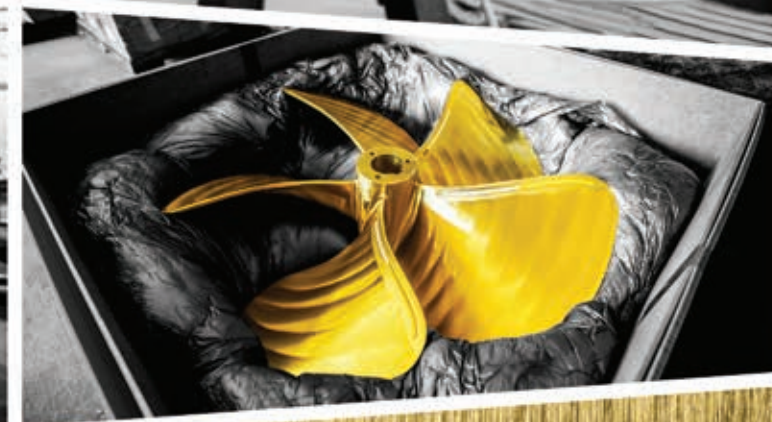
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Surviving broken bills

In the vast blue wilderness of the open ocean, where survival is won through speed, strength, and instinct, few predators command more awe than the marlin. But in rare and fascinating cases, these titans of the sea can be seen surviving, and even thriving, with broken or deformed bills.

Story and photos | Harry R. Hindmarsh

SCHNOZZOLA

The sight of a marlin missing its iconic weapon challenges our understanding of nature's adaptability. How can such a predator hunt without its most defining feature? The answer is a compelling study in resilience, adaptation, and the raw tenacity of life in the ocean.



While it may seem like a death sentence, mounting evidence from anglers, marine biologists, and tagging programs is revealing a far more nuanced—and inspiring—truth: marlin can, and often do, survive with broken bills. They adapt their hunting strategies, shift their diets, and exhibit remarkable resilience that defies expectations.

Marine biologists have long understood that the bill isn't used to impale. High-speed footage and

years of underwater observation has revealed that marlin hunt by slashing sideways through bait balls—tightly packed schools of fish—injuring or stunning multiple prey with each pass allowing them to circle back for an easy meal. These high-efficiency strikes give the marlin a competitive edge in the frenzied, chaotic marine buffet of pelagic life.

But life in the ocean is far from forgiving. Bills

break in many ways: during hunts, while striking hard objects, through entanglement with man-made debris, or in battles with other marlin, tunas, sharks, and more. Fishermen have caught sharks, tuna, and other marlin with broken bills impaled in their bodies. There are witnesses to blue marlin that have been caught with the broken bill of a white marlin sticking out of their bodies. While its



“Against predators or rivals, the bill becomes a shield as much as a sword, defending with jabs, slashes, and evasive speed.”

- Dr. Kelsey James | MARINE BIOLOGIST, NOAA

“When a bill breaks off a marlin, the data suggests that younger fish are able to slightly regrow some of the bill back, but not entirely.”

- Dr. Kelsey James | MARINE BIOLOGIST, NOAA



remarkable that species can survive being impaled with a broken bill, it’s even more remarkable that marlin can survive without the tool that helps them hunt the most.

Some marlin are found with partially broken bills; others are missing the bill entirely. While the assumption has been that these fish suffer a reduced chance of survival, anecdotal and observational data suggest otherwise. We now know that marlin that lose their bills shift their hunting techniques out of necessity. Without a bill to stun prey, broken-bill marlin adopt a strategy more akin to tuna or dolphins—chasing individual fish or stragglers from bait balls and engulfing them with sudden bursts of speed. While less efficient than slashing through a group, this tactic still allows marlin to feed adequately.

Another adaption observed is seeking out injured or isolated fish, scavenging more than they normally would. They’re opportunists, adapting to take advantage of whatever the ocean offers—even slower species like squid that have been found in the stomachs of dead, broken-bill marlins.

Some broken-bill marlin may feed more often or during different times of day to compensate for reduced catch efficiency. They may also avoid high-competition scenarios, where their lack of a bill puts them at a disadvantage.

One of the more interesting observations is “cooperative feeding”. Marlin often hunt in groups or alongside other species like tuna or sailfish. A marlin with a broken bill might not be the one slashing through the bait ball but can still benefit from the disorientation created by others, picking off stunned prey during the frenzy. They’ve been witnessed following behind other marlin, picking off the bait that the leading marlin stuns. Are they working together? Nobody knows for sure.

Observations suggest broken-bill marlin become more conservative in their energy usage. They may strike less frequently or engage in shorter chases to conserve strength. This efficiency-ori-

“The marlin’s bill is a blueprint of evolution, a finely tuned extension of its will, speed, and precision. Without it, is just doesn’t look right.”

- Dr. Kelsey James | MARINE BIOLOGIST, NOAA

ented behavior helps them compensate for their reduced hunting success.

Scientific data on marlin with broken bills is

sparse, but anecdotal evidence from long-term tag-and-release programs and underwater photography is building a clearer picture. In multiple studies, marlin with deformed or absent bills have



been recaptured months or even years after their initial tag, having grown and migrated thousands of miles.

Sport fishers off Costa Rica, Hawaii, and Australia have documented marlin with partial bills actively feeding and evading capture with the same tenacity as their fully equipped counterparts. Some broken bills even appear to regenerate slightly at the edges, showing signs of bone remodeling—

though not full regrowth.

One of the biggest questions regarding broken bills is, “do the bills ever grow back?”

The answer is: The science to date states partially, but not completely. Reporting through tagged fish and photographic evidence of prior caught marlin, bills do appear to regrown slightly, showing that they become more rounded or smoothed

over time. This suggests limited bone remodeling is possible, particularly in younger fish with more regenerative potential. However, there is no confirmed evidence of a marlin fully regrow-

ing its bill to original length or structure.

It’s believed that younger marlin may exhibit greater regenerative ability due to faster cellu-



“Adaption plays a huge role in a marlins’ ability to survive when they have a broken bill. It shows they have the ability to learn how to hunt and survive all over again.”

- Dr. Kelsey James | MARINE BIOLOGIST, NOAA

“Observations suggest broken-bill marlin become more conservative in their energy usage when hunting.”

- Dr. Kelsey James | MARINE BIOLOGIST, NOAA



lar turnover and metabolic rates. Older individuals, by contrast, are more likely to heal without regrowth, resulting in permanent deformity. Still, neither age group is immune to adaptation—both have shown the capacity to continue thriving post-injury.

Perhaps the most surprising revelation is that marlin with broken bills may live just as long as their uninjured counterparts, assuming they avoid infection or starvation in the short term. Studies from the Billfish Foundation and tagging programs from institutions like NOAA show recaptured marlin with damaged bills months or even years after their initial release. These recaptured marlin showed normal migration patterns and growth rates, suggesting survival is not severely compromised.

The reports also show that although precise mortality rates are difficult to calculate, anecdotal data suggest that broken-bill marlin do not suffer dramatically higher mortality rates than their intact counterparts, provided they are otherwise healthy.

Post-release mortality, however, is significantly higher when bill damage occurs due to poor handling (e.g., excessive time out of water, rough gripping of the bill, or deep-hooking injuries).

For researchers like Dr. Kelsey James, a marine biologist studying billfish migration, these cases offer more than curiosity—they offer clues into fish resilience in an increasingly industrialized ocean. “Every time we spot a marlin with a broken bill actively feeding, it reminds us how adaptable life can be,” says Dr. James. “It also tells us that conservation strategies—like reducing bycatch and handling stress—are worth it. These fish can recover, but only if we give them the chance.”

The marlin, even without its iconic bill, remains a powerful emblem of the ocean’s unpredictable challenges and nature’s unmatched adaptability. While the bill may define its identity to us fishermen, it is not the total sum of the fish. Speed, endurance, intelligence, and opportunism all work together to ensure that a marlin can survive—even thrive—without the perfect form evolution gave it.



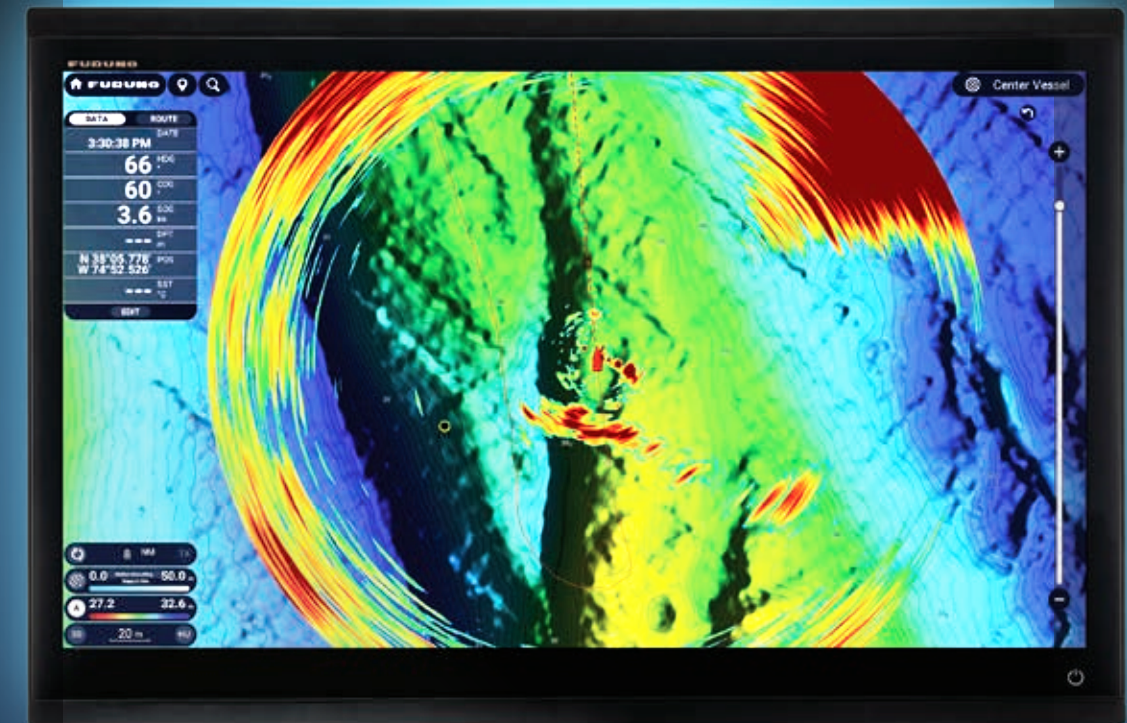
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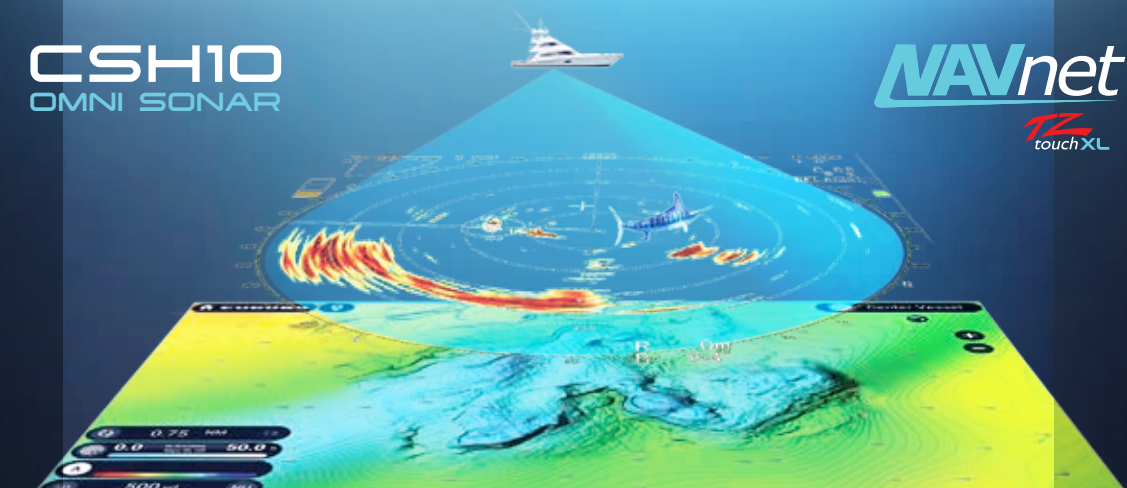
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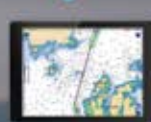
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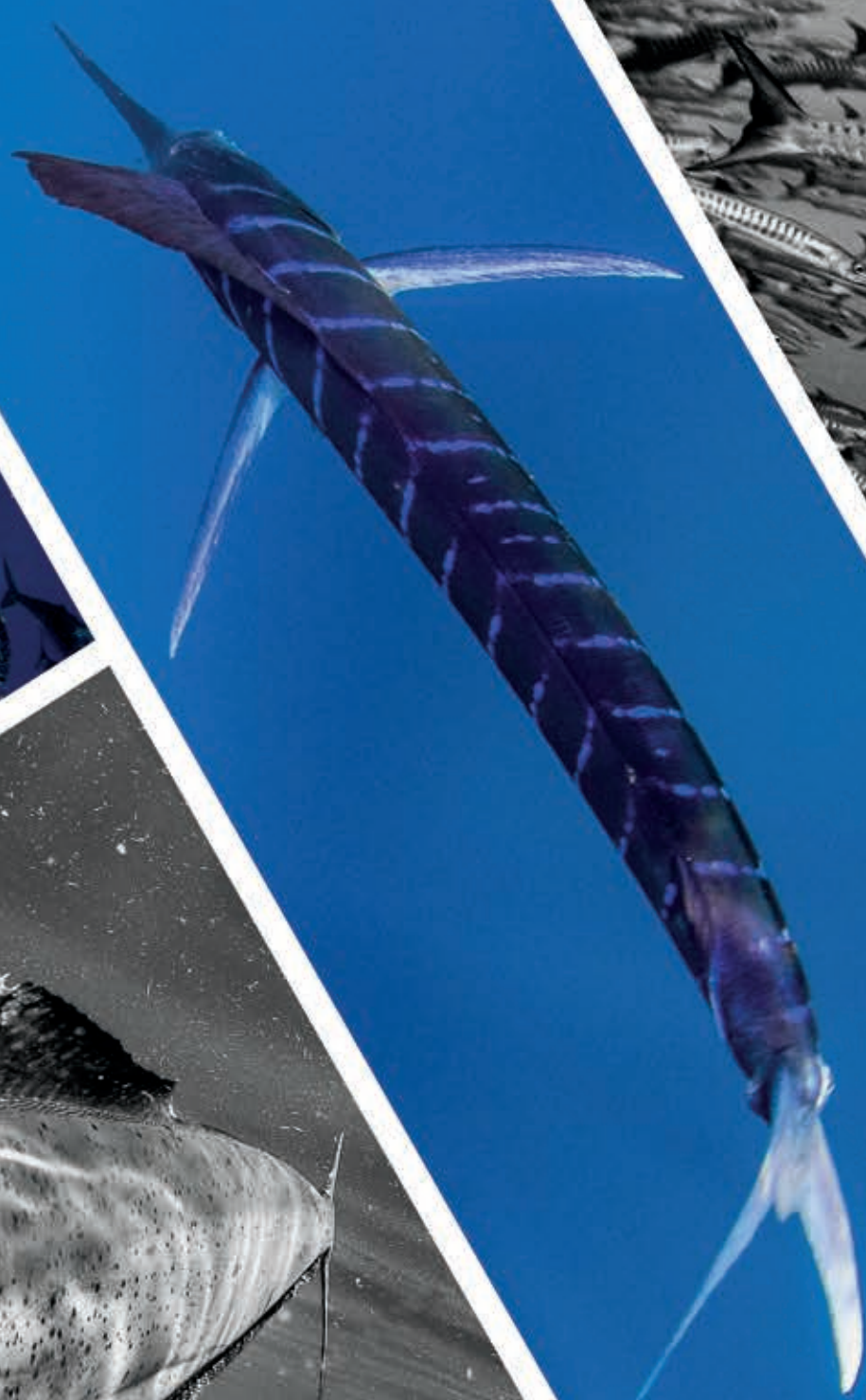
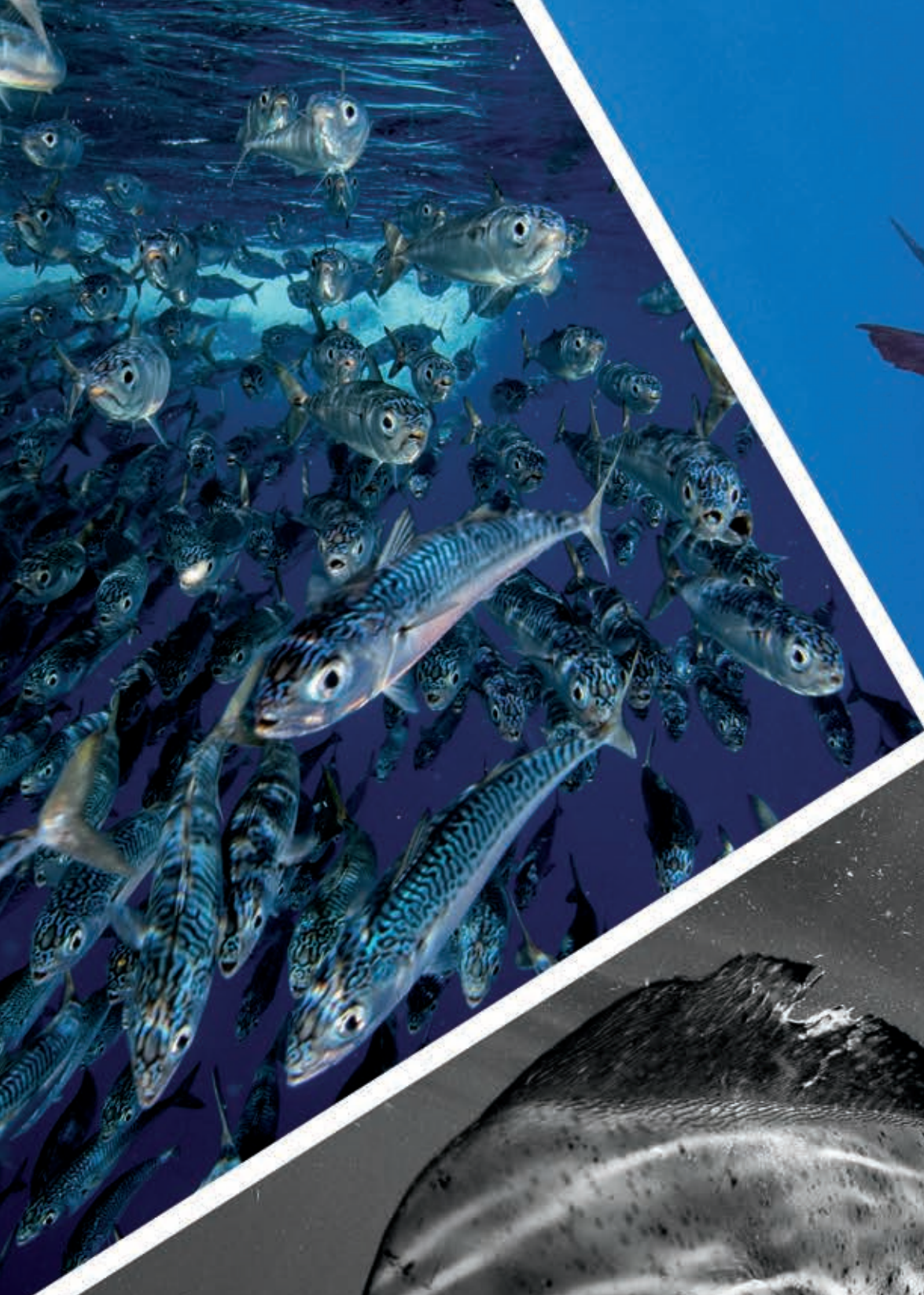
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PHOTOS BY: HARRY R. HINDMARSH

Every trip offshore is an unpredictable adventure chasing big marlin and massive tuna, documenting the tension of a giant on the line or freezing a moment of calm between the chaos. For me, it's more than just a job; it's a way to connect with nature, with people who live by the tides, and with the stories that unfold far from shore.













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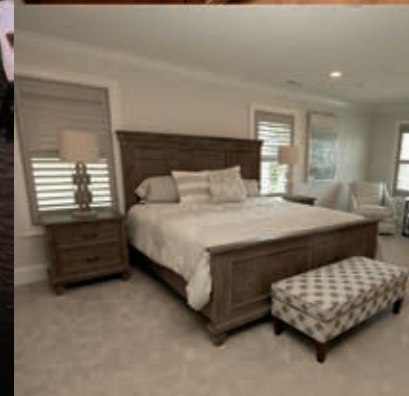


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When people describe something incredibly rare, they usually start with “my white whale”. It’s rare to see a white whale, it’s rare to see a grander blue marlin. It’s also incredibly rare to see killer whales on the East Coast of America, especially off the waters of Ocean City down to the Outer Banks.

EAST COAST KILLER WHALES

from OC to the OBX

Story by: Robert King Byard



Killer whales, also known as orcas, are apex predators and one of the most widely distributed marine mammals on Earth. While they are often associated with the colder waters of the Pacific Northwest or the dramatic fjords of Norway, killer whales are also found along the East Coast of the United States, though sightings there are far less common. These elusive and powerful creatures are drawing increasing scientific interest as researchers learn more about their behavior, range, and role in the Atlantic marine ecosystem.

On the East Coast of the United States, killer whale sightings stretch from the cold waters off Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, down to the mid-Atlantic states, and occasionally as far south as Florida. While they are not considered common in these waters, there have been confirmed reports in regions such as the Gulf of Maine, Cape Cod Bay, and even off the coast of North Carolina and South Carolina.

A handful of orcas have even ventured into the Gulf of America. Their appearance is irregular, and they are not part of any well-documented, resident popu-

lation like those found off the Pacific Coast. Instead, East Coast killer whales are thought to be part of a wide-ranging and little-known North Atlantic population that may migrate great distances between North America, Europe, and the Arctic.

One of the most recognizable orcas in this region is “Old Thom,” a solitary male frequently spotted in the Gulf of Maine. Thom’s recurring visits have provided rare insight into the behavior of Atlantic orcas, as he often travels with Atlantic white-sided dolphins, a highly unusual behavior for a top predator.

Unlike the specialized diets seen in Pacific populations—such as the salmon-eating Southern Residents or mammal-hunting transients—the East Coast orcas appear to have more generalized feeding habits. They have been observed preying on a variety of marine species, including seals, such as harbor and gray seals, porpoises, large fish, including tuna, swordfish, and squid in deeper offshore waters.

One thing’s for sure, when sportfishers spot orcas, that’s usually a pretty good sign that no marlin or tuna are around. Captains have reported that the

presence of orcas coincidentally happen when there are long periods of no bites.

Killer whales use a mix of stealth, speed, and intelligence in their hunts. In the Atlantic, they have been seen working cooperatively to herd fish or chase dolphins. Some display surface-churning behavior or use tail slaps to stun prey. However, due to the rarity of observations, much of their hunting behavior along the East Coast remains undocumented.

Their opportunistic diet suggests they are capable of adapting to various food sources, depending on availability. This trait could prove advantageous as warming ocean temperatures and shifting prey distributions continue to reshape the marine food web.

Known for their highly structured social lives, Pacific pods are often matrilineal and stable over decades. On the East Coast, however, the limited data available suggests a different story. Many of the orcas observed in Atlantic waters are seen alone or in small, temporary groups. Whether this reflects a different social organization or simply the transient nature of the animals passing through remains unclear.

That said, all killer whales communicate using a complex system of vocalizations, including whistles, echolocation clicks, and pulsed calls. These sounds help them navigate, locate prey, and maintain contact with pod members. Ongoing efforts to record orca vocalizations in the Atlantic may eventually lead to the identification of distinct acoustic dialects, which could help define different ecotypes or family groups.

The reproductive habits of East Coast orcas are not well

Known for their highly structured social lives, Pacific pods are often matrilineal and stable over decades. On the East Coast, however, the limited data available suggests a different story.

studied, but they are assumed to follow general orca mating behavior. In general, killer whales become sexually mature between 10 and 15 years of age. Females typically give birth every 3 to 10 years and may have 4 to 6 calves over their lifetime. Gestation lasts about 17 months, and calves are usually born tail-first to prevent drowning.

Mating usually occurs outside of the animal's natal pod to avoid inbreeding, though how this is managed among widely dispersed and poorly under-

stood Atlantic orcas is still a mystery. It is possible that long-range migrations and brief inter-pod interactions during periods of high food availability provide opportunities for mating.

Observing breeding behavior in wild orcas is rare, particularly for Atlantic populations. No known calving grounds have been identified off the East Coast, but that does not rule out the possibility that orcas use these waters for mating or even giving birth during their extensive travels.

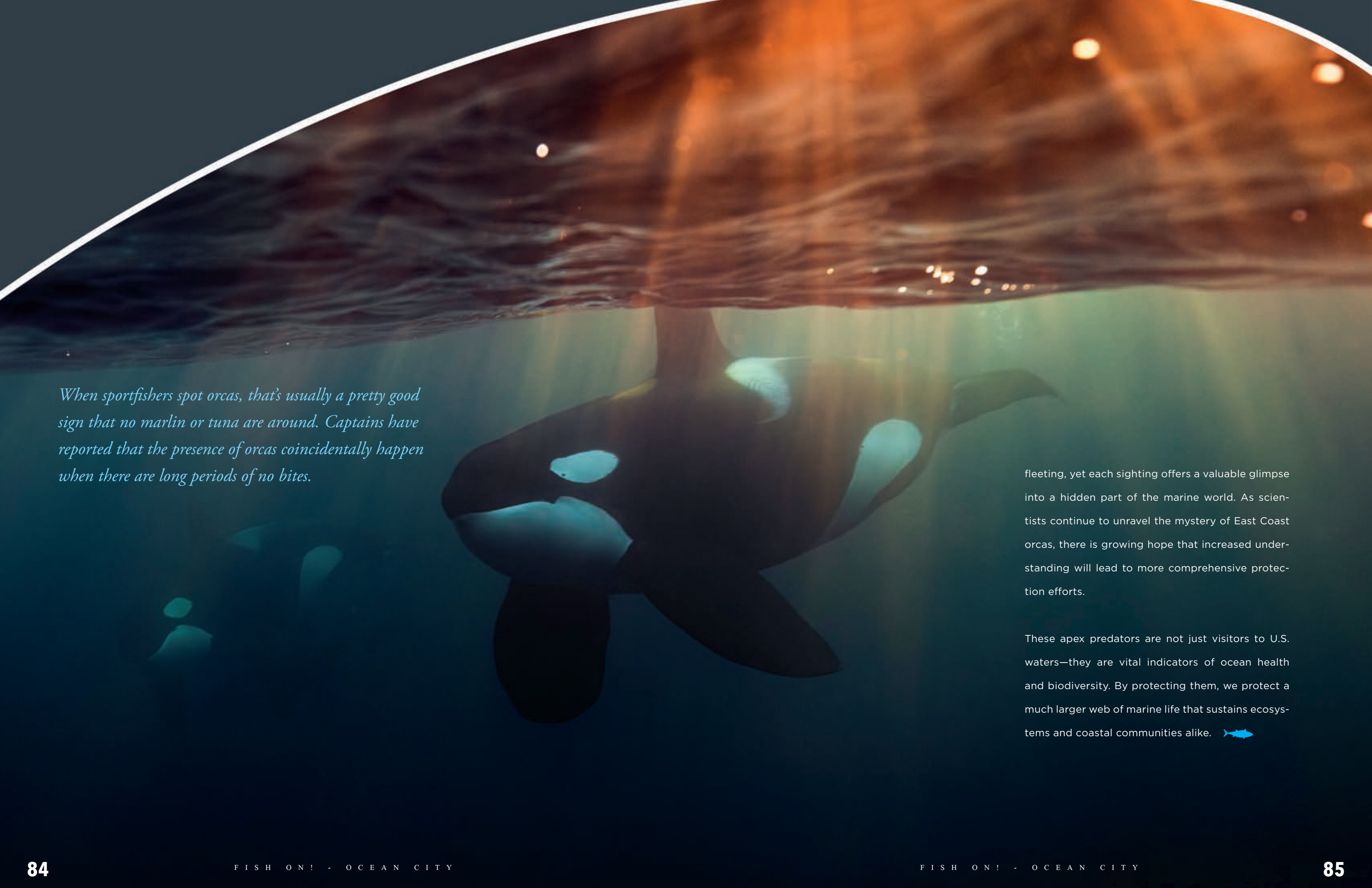
In recent years, scientists have increased efforts to understand Atlantic killer whale populations. These efforts include:

- Photo-identification of individuals like Old Thom
- Acoustic monitoring to capture calls and echolocation patterns
- Satellite tagging to track movement and migration
- Collaboration with fishermen and whale watchers to report sightings

Citizen science platforms and social media have also played a significant role in documenting orca appearances. Platforms like WhaleMap and Atlantic White Shark Conservancy have encouraged mariners to report sightings in real time, offering scientists new data points to analyze.


Killer whales on the East Coast of the United States remain one of the most enigmatic marine predators in the Atlantic Ocean. With no established resident population, their appearances are rare and often





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fleeting, yet each sighting offers a valuable glimpse into a hidden part of the marine world. As scientists continue to unravel the mystery of East Coast orcas, there is growing hope that increased understanding will lead to more comprehensive protection efforts.

These apex predators are not just visitors to U.S. waters—they are vital indicators of ocean health and biodiversity. By protecting them, we protect a much larger web of marine life that sustains ecosystems and coastal communities alike. 



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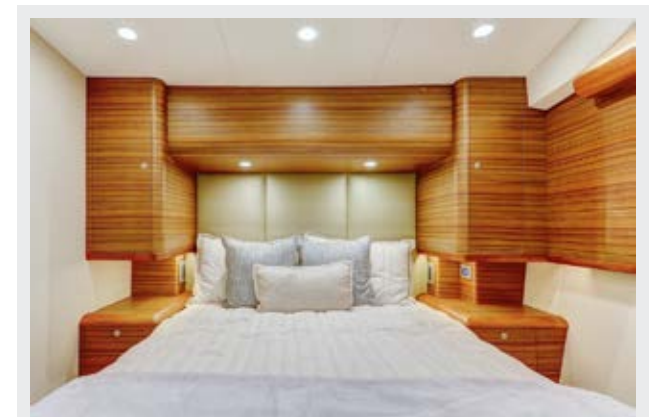
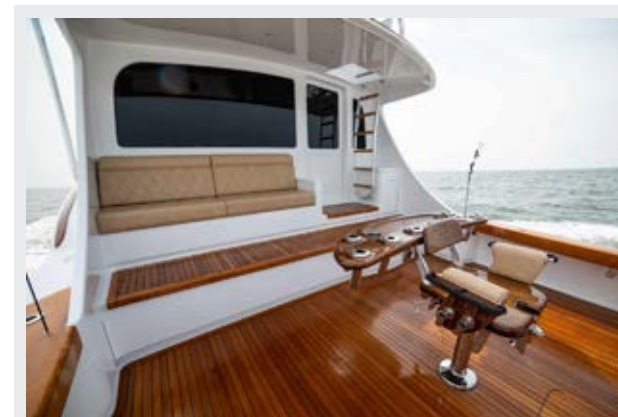


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- Jon Duffie, President and Owner of Duffie Boatworks

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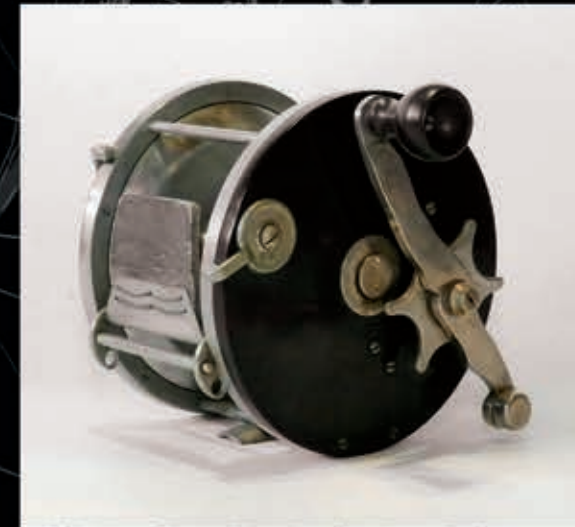


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ANTIQUE ANGLING

The history behind
OLD FISHING REELS

Robert King Byard

“When reels had no drag, every marlin hooked was a battle of will. Your hands blistered, but your pride burned brighter.”

- Edward Vom Hofe | VOM HOFE REELS



“The days of using a leather pad on your thumb to slow a fish down needed to be rethought. That’s why I did it.”

- Edward Vom Hofe | VOM HOFE REELS

Edward Vom Hofe is widely considered the father of the modern offshore fishing reel.



When a blue marlin explodes from the deep, tail-walking across the wake in a burst of cobalt fury, it’s not just a battle between man and fish—it’s a test of gear honed over more than a century of innovation. Nowhere is that evolution more evident than in the offshore fishing reel, a specialized piece of equipment that has transformed dramatically since its inception. From the early handcrafted masterpieces to today’s high-performance engineering marvels, the history of offshore reels is one of craftsmanship, innovation, and the relentless quest for the ultimate catch.

The Birth of the Big Game Reel

Offshore fishing reels came into their own in the early 1900s, a time when saltwater sportfishing was still in its infancy. Unlike freshwater reels, which had been around since at least the 18th century, the offshore reel had to be built to withstand enormous strain—both from the environment and the fish. Early reels were often modified freshwater models, but they proved inadequate against powerful species like bluefin tuna, marlin, and swordfish.

Enter the master craftsmen of the era. Few names loom larger in early offshore fishing history than Edward Vom Hofe. A German-American machinist and tackle maker, Vom Hofe is widely considered one of the fathers of the modern saltwater reel. Based in New York City, his shop began producing reels in the late 1800s, but it was in the early 1900s that he truly revolutionized big game tackle.

Vom Hofe’s reels—particularly his famed B-Ocean series—were made from nickel silver and hard rubber, with unmatched tolerances and hand-fitted parts. His use of dual drag systems (leather and cork) laid the groundwork for future drag technology. These reels were not only mechanically sound but also beautiful—polished, engraved, and revered by serious anglers and collectors alike.

As big game fishing gained popularity, so too did the need for more specialized gear. Early IGFA (International Game Fish Association) world records, including those set in the 1920s

and 1930s, were often captured using Vom Hofe reels. The IGFA, established in 1939, became the governing body for record-setting sportfishing, and the reels that accompanied those early records became legend. One of the most notable was the 1,135-pound Atlantic bluefin tuna caught off Nova Scotia in 1949 by angler Ken Fraser—still a benchmark in big game fishing.

Fin-Nor and the Post-War Boom

While Vom Hofe laid the foundation, another titan would emerge in the post-war years to transform offshore reel design: Fin-Nor.

Founded in 1933 in Miami, Florida, Fin-Nor began as a precision machine shop, but it was in 1936, when famed Miami angler and tackle innovator Alfred Glassell collaborated with Fin-Nor to build a reel capable of landing giant marlin, that the company’s legacy was cemented. Their goal? A reel strong

enough to take on the ocean’s most powerful predators—particularly the black marlin of Peru.

In 1953, using a Fin-Nor reel, Alfred Glassell caught a 1,560-pound black marlin off the coast of Cabo Blanco, Peru. The fish, which remains one of the most iconic catches in IGFA history, demonstrated the effectiveness of Fin-Nor’s sealed, stainless steel, and bronze reel construction. It was a defining moment not just for the company but for offshore fishing as a whole.

Fin-Nor reels were known for their unbreakable frames and powerful drag systems. The introduction of the “Wedding Cake” design—a series of stacked drag washers that mimicked the look of a tiered cake—allowed for higher drag pressures and smoother resistance. This was a critical development, as previous drags often failed under extreme pressure or heated up and seized during prolonged battles.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Fin-Nor dominated the offshore scene. Their reels were used to catch hundreds of world-record marlin, tuna, and swordfish. At a time when battles with 1,000-pound fish could last several hours, reliable drag and frame integrity were paramount.

Ocean City Fishing Reels, founded in Philadelphia in the early 1920s, quickly became one of the most prominent American reel manufacturers during the golden age of sportfishing. Known for producing durable and affordable saltwater reels, Ocean City catered to both inshore and offshore anglers. Their big game models, such as the Ocean City 609 and 613, were often seen aboard East Coast charter boats from the 1930s through the 1950s. While not as refined as Vom Hofe or Fin-Nor reels, Ocean City reels were praised for their solid construction, accessibility, and ease of maintenance. As a result, they became popular among recreational anglers chasing tuna, sharks, and marlin, especially those who couldn't afford the more expensive high-end brands.

Despite their popularity in mid-century sportfishing, Ocean City began to struggle in the 1960s as competition intensified and the market shifted toward more advanced, high-performance reels made by companies like Penn and Shimano. As consumer expectations evolved—particularly regarding drag performance and corrosion resistance—Ocean City reels started to fall behind in both technology and design. In the late 1960s, the company was acquired by True Temper, which continued limited reel production under the Ocean City name for a few more years. Ultimately, Ocean City ceased operations entirely in the early 1970s, marking the end of an era for one of America's most prolific reel manufacturers.

The Evolution of Drag: From Leather to Lever

In the early days, drag systems were rudimentary at best. Edward Vom Hofe's leather-and-cork drag washers offered smooth resistance but were susceptible to water damage and wear. The next generation, pioneered by Fin-Nor and

others, introduced materials like asbestos (since discontinued) and stainless steel, allowing for higher drag pressures.

One of the most significant developments in drag evolution was the lever drag system. Unlike star drags—which require manual tightening of a knob and don't allow easy mid-fight adjustment—lever drags use a lever mechanism to set the drag pressure across a pre-calibrated range. This gave anglers precise control, particularly useful when transitioning from "strike" to "full" drag during a prolonged fight.

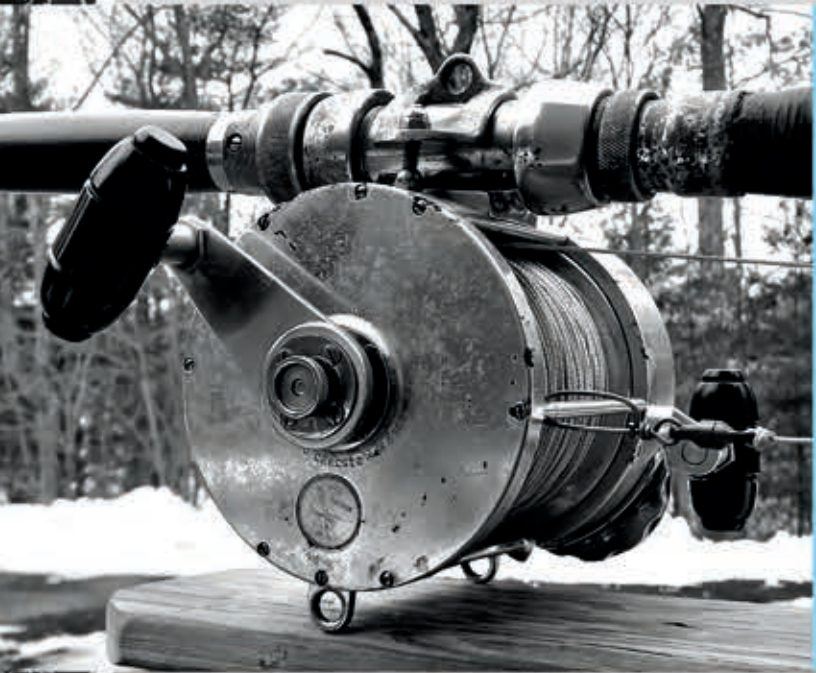
By the 1970s and 1980s, companies like Penn and Shimano entered the scene with their own innovations. The Penn International series introduced anodized aluminum frames and high-speed gearing, while Shimano's Tiagra line brought in advanced drag materials like carbon fiber. These modern systems offered smoother performance, greater heat dissipation, and increased longevity.

Another revolution came in the form of sealed drags. Saltwater is corrosive, and keeping the internal components of a reel free from moisture and salt intrusion became a top priority. Manufacturers began incorporating rubber gaskets and fully enclosed drag systems to ensure durability—even after repeated dunkings.

Records, Reels, and Legends

The history of offshore reels is inseparable from the legends who wielded them. Names like Zane Grey, Ernest Hemingway, and Michael Lerner helped popularize big game angling. Hemingway, in particular, with his exploits off Bimini and Havana, brought marlin fishing into the public imagination. He favored reels from brands like Vom Hofe and later Fin-Nor, often paired with bamboo or heavy glass rods.

Throughout the golden age of big game fishing—from the 1930s through the 1960s—the pursuit of world records became a na-



The Fin-Nor 12 G Model was famous for having a "double handle" reel, popular in the late 1930's

"Before drag systems, the only thing standing between you and the ocean's fury was how tightly you gripped that reel."

- Alfred Glassell | FIN-NOR REELS



When reels became powerful enough to win the battles, the world records started to arrive at the scales.

"Every time we thought we had invented the strongest reel know to man, a bigger fish would come along. Now you can catch a grander black marlin."

- Alfred Glassell | FIN-NOR REELS

“With an Ocean City in your hand, you weren’t just fishing — you were carrying on a legacy, one crank at a time.”

- Michael Lerner | IGFA RECORD HOLDER



tional obsession. Early IGFA record books read like a hall of fame for tackle innovation. From the 1,000-pound granders caught in the Pacific to massive yellowfin tuna landed in the Gulf of Mexico, every record reflected both human determination and the progression of reel technology.

In the modern era, anglers like Guy Harvey and Capt. Billy Pate continued to push boundaries, often working with manufacturers to develop specialized tackle for fly-fishing and light-tackle records. Today, reels are designed using aerospace-grade materials, 3D CAD modeling, and rigorous salt-water testing. But the DNA of Vom Hofe’s hand-machined precision and Fin-Nor’s brute durability lives on.

The Future of Offshore Reels

As we look to the future, the evolution continues. New materials such as carbon composites, titanium, and ceramic drag washers offer even greater strength-to-weight ratios.

Electronic line counters, Bluetooth integration, and real-time drag monitoring are becoming part of the offshore angler’s arsenal. Yet despite these advances, the soul of offshore fishing remains unchanged: man versus beast, skill versus strength, technology versus nature.

In many ways, today’s offshore reels are the culmination of over a century of design, experimentation, and hard-earned lessons. Whether it’s an old-school Fin-Nor mounted on a teak rod or a gleaming modern Shimano paired with a carbon blank, each reel tells a story—a story of battles fought, records broken, and dreams cast upon the sea.

From the hand-lathed reels of Vom Hofe’s shop to today’s precision-engineered machines, offshore fishing reels have always been more than just tools—they’re the link between angler and ocean, tradition and progress. The next time your drag screams and line peels off into the deep, take a moment to appreciate the legacy cranking away in your hands. 🐟





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










































































































SPECIES	BAIT OR LURE	METHOD	LOCATION	AVE. WEIGHT	RECORD
Atlantic Tripletail	Tripletail are opportunistic feeders, so you can use a variety of baits such as live shrimp, small crabs, or baitfish. Artificial lures like jigs, spoons, and soft plastic baits can also be effective.	Use medium to heavy fishing tackle with a spinning or baitcasting rod, depending on your preference. Use a sturdy fishing line, preferably between 15 to 20-pound test.	Ocean waters over and around wrecks	3 – 10 lbs	11 lbs
Black Sea Bass	Squid, crab, cut fish, clam, shrimp, diamond jigs, metal jigs	Bottomfishing, generally near and over underwater obstructions (wrecks, reefs, rocks and rough bottom areas)	Ocean waters	1 – 3.5 lbs	8 lbs
Bluefish (large)	Artificial lures - spoons, tube eels, metal squids, surface plugs Cut bait - fresh menhaden, mullet, herring, spot, ballyhoo or mackerel	Trolling, casting or jigging to schools of fish with artificial lures; surfcasting with cut bait or lures Chumming while using cut bait. Bluefish can be taken on streamer flies with a fly rod	Offshore and coastal waters	8 – 16 lbs	23.5 lbs
Bluefish (small)	Artificial lures - spoons, feather lures, metal squids, surface plugs and cut bait	Trolling or casting to schools of fish with artificial lures Surfcasting and bottom fishing with cut bait and surfcasting with artificial lures	Coastal ocean waters, ocean surf, inlets	1 – 5 lbs	N/A
Cobia	Live bait - eels, spot, menhaden, mullet Artificial lures - spoons, white bucktails, plastic eels, plugs Cut bait - menhaden or spot	Cast, drift or slow troll live baits around buoys, underwater obstructions and schools of fish swimming on the surface. Anchor, chum and fish live baits, fresh dead baits and cut bait in chum slick and on bottom. Cast and troll lures around buoys, obstructions and to schools of bullfish (rays) or schools, pods or individual cobia swimming on surface	Ocean waters, around buoys, along coastal beaches, and inlets	20 – 50 lbs	94.6 lbs
Croaker	Peeler crab, bloodworms, cut bait, squid, shrimp	Bottomfishing with bait, anchored or drifting from boats, piers, docks, shore and surf	Tributary waters around Ocean City, coastal ocean waters, and inlets	0.5 – 2 lbs	N/A
Dolphin	Artificial lures - offshore trolling lures Cut bait, ballyhoo, squid	Trolling with lures, ballyhoo and squid; casting to schools of dolphin around weedlines and floating debris with cut bait (fish or squid) and lures (bucktails, surface plugs, streamer flies)	Offshore ocean waters	2 – 20 lbs	74.5 lbs
Black Drum	Whole clam, peeler crab, whelk, peeler crab/clam “sandwich”, bucktail and leadhead jigs	Bottomfishing with bait on “fishfinder” rig. Running tides and late afternoons and evenings considered best, occasionally caught on bucktails or metal squids by casting or jigging to a school of fish	Ocean waters, around buoys, along coastal beaches, and inlets	40 – 60 lbs	79 lbs
Red Drum	Cut bait - fresh mullet, spot, menhaden, peeler crabs Artificial lures - spoons, large plugs, jigs	Bottomfishing with bait on “fishfinder” rig, trolling and casting spoons, plugs and jigs	Ocean waters, around buoys, along coastal beaches, and inlets	30 – 50 lbs	70 lbs
Flounder	Live bait - minnows and small fish, frozen minnows, bluefish, flounder, shark belly, squid, minnow/strip combination Artificial lures - bucktails; big strip baits and live spot or small mullet often used for big fish at the CBBT	Drift fishing with live or dead natural baits fished on the bottom; slow trolling natural baits on bottom; casting from beaches and piers; trolling small buck-tails dressed with strip baits (especially for big fish along Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel); casting bucktails	Ocean waters, around buoys, along coastal beaches, and inlets	1 – 3 lbs	17 lbs
Kingfish	Bloodworms, shrimp, small pieces of cut bait, squid, sand fleas	Bottomfishing with bait	Surf zone of coastal waters, Ocean waters, around buoys, along coastal beaches, and inlets & piers	0.5 – 1.5 lbs	2.5 lbs
Mackerel, Atlantic	Small tube worms and jigs	Jigging to schools of suspended fish	Coastal and offshore ocean waters, from 5-35 miles offshore	0.5 – 3 lbs	None
Mackerel, King	Live bait - menhaden, mullet, spot, small bluefish Artificial lures - spoons, feather lures, nylon jigs, strip baits and small whole ballyhoo	Slow trolling, drifting or anchoring with live bait; trolling with artificial lures, strip bait and ballyhoo	Ocean waters, around buoys, along coastal beaches, and inlets	5 – 20 lbs	47 lbs
Mackerel, Spanish	Small artificial lures - spoons, metal lures, feather and nylon lures Small live baits - menhaden, mullet	Trolling; casting to schools of fish	Coastal ocean waters, particularly off inlets, along tidelines, and over coastal wrecks	1 – 3 lbs	N/A
Blue Marlin	Whole dead fish - ballyhoo, mullets, spanish mackerel, squid Artificial lures - offshore trolling lures, and live small dolphin, bonito and skipjack tuna	Trolling	Offshore ocean waters	150 – 400 lbs	1,135 lbs
White Marlin	Whole dead fish - ballyhoo, mullet, squid, strip baits, eels Artificial lures - offshore trolling lures, pilchards, cigar minnows	Trolling; occasionally casting live baits to marlin “balling” bait or swimming on surface	Offshore ocean waters	40 – 60 lbs	135 lbs
Sailfish	Whole dead fish -ballyhoo, small mullet, strip baits, squid Artificial lures - small offshore trolling lures, live bait (small fish)	Trolling; also, sailfish seem to be attracted to slow trolled live baits fished in similar methods as used to slow troll for king mackerel	Offshore ocean waters	20 – 40 lbs	N/A

SPECIES	BAIT OR LURE	METHOD	LOCATION	AVE. WEIGHT	RECORD
Sharks	Whole dead fish and cut fish; live bait (fish)	Anchor, chum and fish dead and live fish baits in chum slick and on bottom	Offshore and coastal ocean waters	50 – 250 lbs	876 lbs Mako
Sheepshead	Fiddler crabs, mole crabs (sand fleas), clams	Fishing bait near the bottom (suspended off the bottom) near submerged structures	Wrecks in nearshore coastal waters, Ocean waters, around buoys, and pilings in inlets	3 – 8 lbs	18 lbs
Spadefish	Pieces of fresh mussels and clams; pieces of jellyfish	Fish visible schools of fish around obstructions (buoys, towers, etc.) with small (#1 or #2) double strength hooks	Wrecks in nearshore coastal waters, Ocean waters, around buoys, and pilings in inlets	3 – 8 lbs	N/A
Spot	Bloodworms, peeler crab, clam	Bottomfishing with bait; anchored or drifting from boats, also caught from docks, piers, shore and surf; big runs of fish in the fall in lower Chesapeake Bay and in surf and piers of Virginia Beach	Tributary waters around Ocean City, coastal ocean waters, and inlets	8 – 12 oz	N/A
Striped Bass	Artificial lures - spoons, plastic eels, bucktails, surface plugs, swimming plugs, peeler crab, bloodworms, eels, cut bait, live bait	Troll artificial lures around bridges, piers, Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, jetties or troll in vicinity of schools of fish (where gulls diving and slicks on the water); cast bucktails and plugs around bridges, piers, and jetties; bottomfishing with bloodworms in deep holes, creeks and rivers that flow into Chesapeake Bay during winter peeler crab baits fished in tributary rivers and creeks near shore during summer	All coastal inshore and Chesapeake Bay waters (tidal waters, including Bay tributary rivers and Eastern Shore bayside creeks); best concentrations of fish in main portion of Chesapeake Bay and around Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel; large fish most often found along CBBT, main portion of Chesapeake Bay and off the Virginia Capes at the mouth of the Bay.	5 – 25 lbs	57.2 lbs
Swordfish	Whole dead squid and fish	Fish at night from a drifting boat using natural baits with chemical lightsticks, with baits weighted to maintain specific depths	Offshore ocean waters		393 lbs
Tarpon	Whole dead fish - spot, croaker, menhaden Live bait - spot, croaker, menhaden, mullet, whole squid Artificial lures - plugs and weighted streamer flies	Anchor and fish live bait under floats, fish dead bait on the bottom and at various depths. Cast artificial lures to rolling fish	Inlets, interior marsh areas, and ocean waters along the beaches of Eastern Shore seaside barrier islands; fish deep holes on low tides and shallow areas on high tides	40 – 80 lbs	N/A
Tautog	Crab (blue, fiddler, green and mole crabs); clams; whelk	Bottomfishing with bait over underwater obstructions (wrecks, reefs, rocks)	Wrecks in nearshore coastal waters, Ocean waters, around buoys, and bridge pilings in inlets	3 – 6 lbs	28.8 lbs
Trout, Gray (Weakfish)	Artificial lures - bucktails, lead jigs with plastic tails, metal jigs Live bait - spot and small mullet, peeler crab, squid, cut bait	Jigging or casting artificial lures to schools of fish on bottom or suspended above the bottom; bottomfishing with live and natural baits from anchored or drifting boat; surfcasting with cut bait or squid	Wrecks in nearshore coastal waters, Ocean waters, around buoys, and pilings in inlets	1 – 8 lbs	16 lbs
Trout, Speck-led	Artificial lures - mirro-sided plugs, bucktails, plastic tail jigs Live bait - small spot, mullet, live shrimp	Spring method: peeler crab baits fished near shore of marshy or grassy areas on flooding tides; Fall method: casting artificial lures; also some live bait fishing, trolling and jigging	Submerged grass flats and marshes, wrecks in nearshore coastal waters, around buoys, and bridge/dock pilings in and around inlets	2 – 4 lbs	N/A
Tuna, Bigeye	Whole dead fish - bally hoo, squid Artificial lures - feather lures, cedar plugs, offshore trolling	Trolling	Offshore ocean waters	100 – 175 lbs	375.5 lbs
Tuna, Bluefin	Artificial lures - cedar plugs, feather lures, spoons, squid, small fish	Trolling, chunking and chumming	Offshore ocean waters	30 – 70 lbs	625 lbs
Tuna, Yellowfin	Whole dead fish - bally hoo, squid, Artificial lures - feather lures, cedar plugs, offshore trolling	Trolling, chunking and chumming	Offshore ocean waters	30 – 70 lbs	236.5 lbs
Tunny, (False Albacore)	Artificial lures - small feather & nylon lures, spoons, cedar plugs Strip baits	Trolling, casting metal lures to surface fish	Offshore and coastal ocean waters; occasion-ally in lower Chesapeake Bay	6 – 14 lbs	77 lbs
Wahoo	Artificial lures - offshore trolling lures, feather lures, spoons, large plugs, small dead fish	Trolling	Offshore ocean waters	20 – 40 lbs	131 lbs

DELMARVA SALTWATER FISHING CALENDAR

 Available  Peak Season

SPECIES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Amberjack												
Atlantic Mackerel												
Black Drum												
Blue Marlin												
Bluefin Tuna												
Bluefish												
Cobia												
Croaker												
Dolphin												
Flounder												
Gray Trout												
King Mackerel												
Kingfish (Roundhead)												
Red Drum	 <small>Puppy Drum</small>	 <small>Puppy Drum</small>	 <small>Puppy Drum</small>								 <small>Puppy Drum</small>	 <small>Puppy Drum</small>
Sailfish												
Sea Bass												
Sheepshead												
Spadefish												
Spanish Mackerel												
Speckled Trout												
Spot												
Striped Bass												
Tarpon												
Tautog												
Wahoo												
White Marlin												
Yellowfin Tuna												

Note: Chart shows availability of fish in local waters; fishery regulations may establish varying open and closed seasons.



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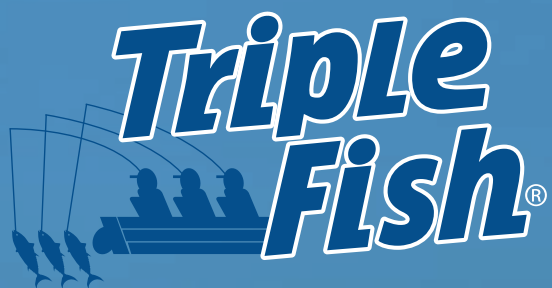
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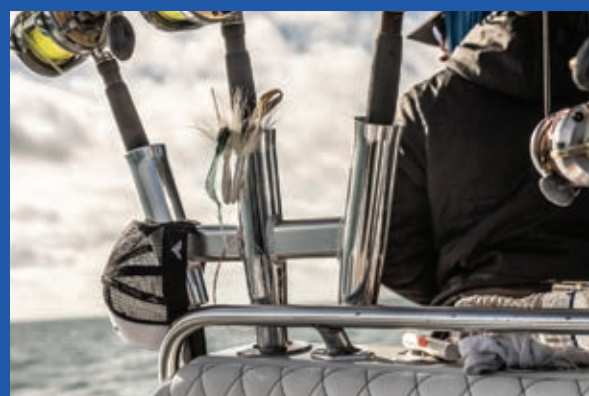
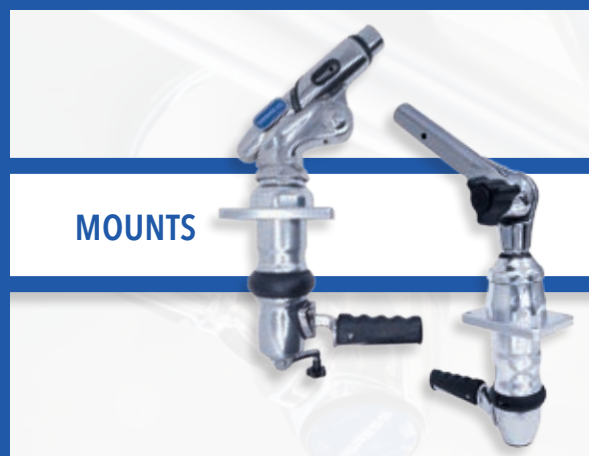
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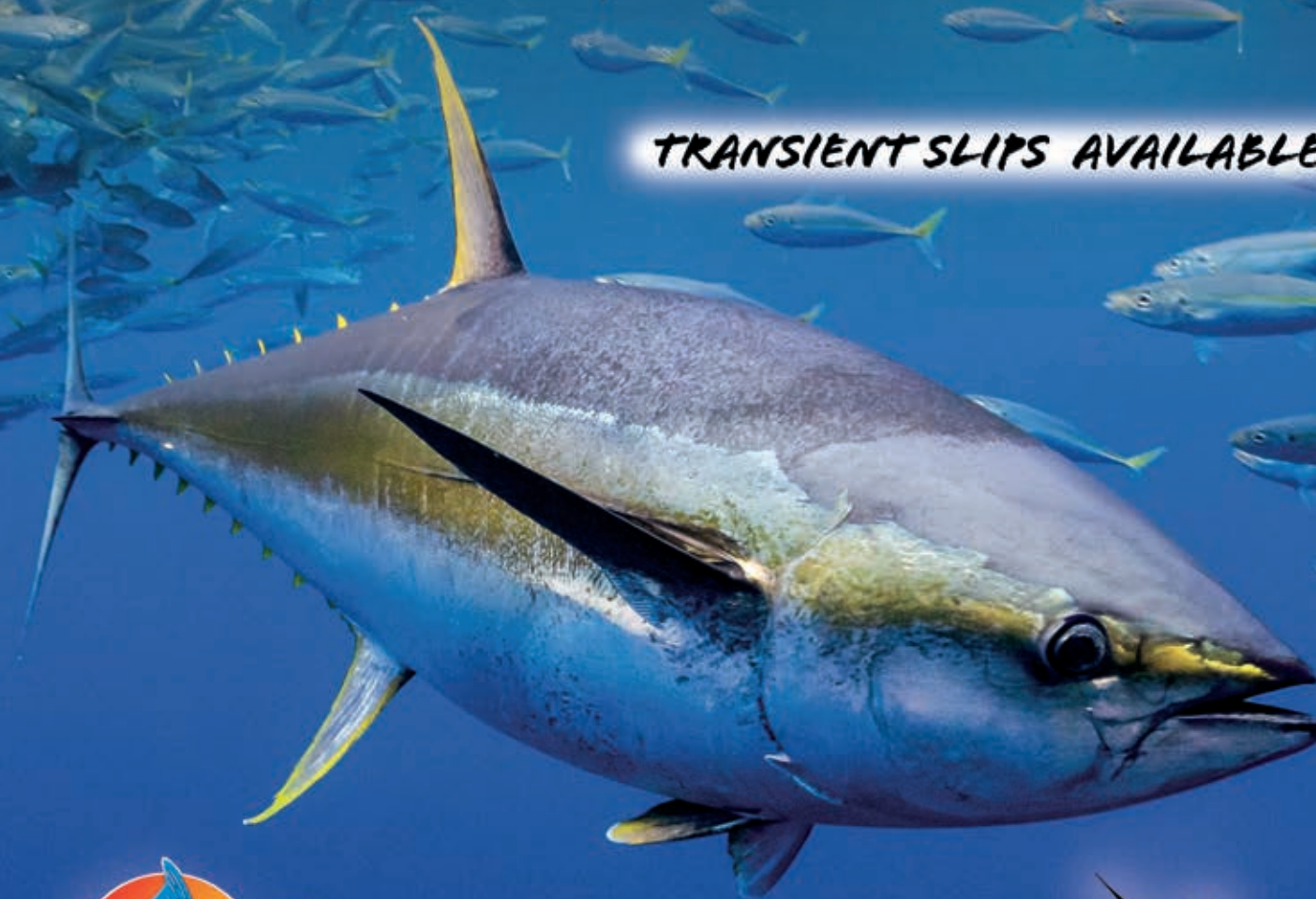


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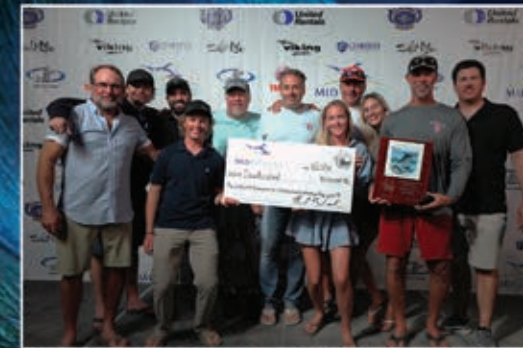
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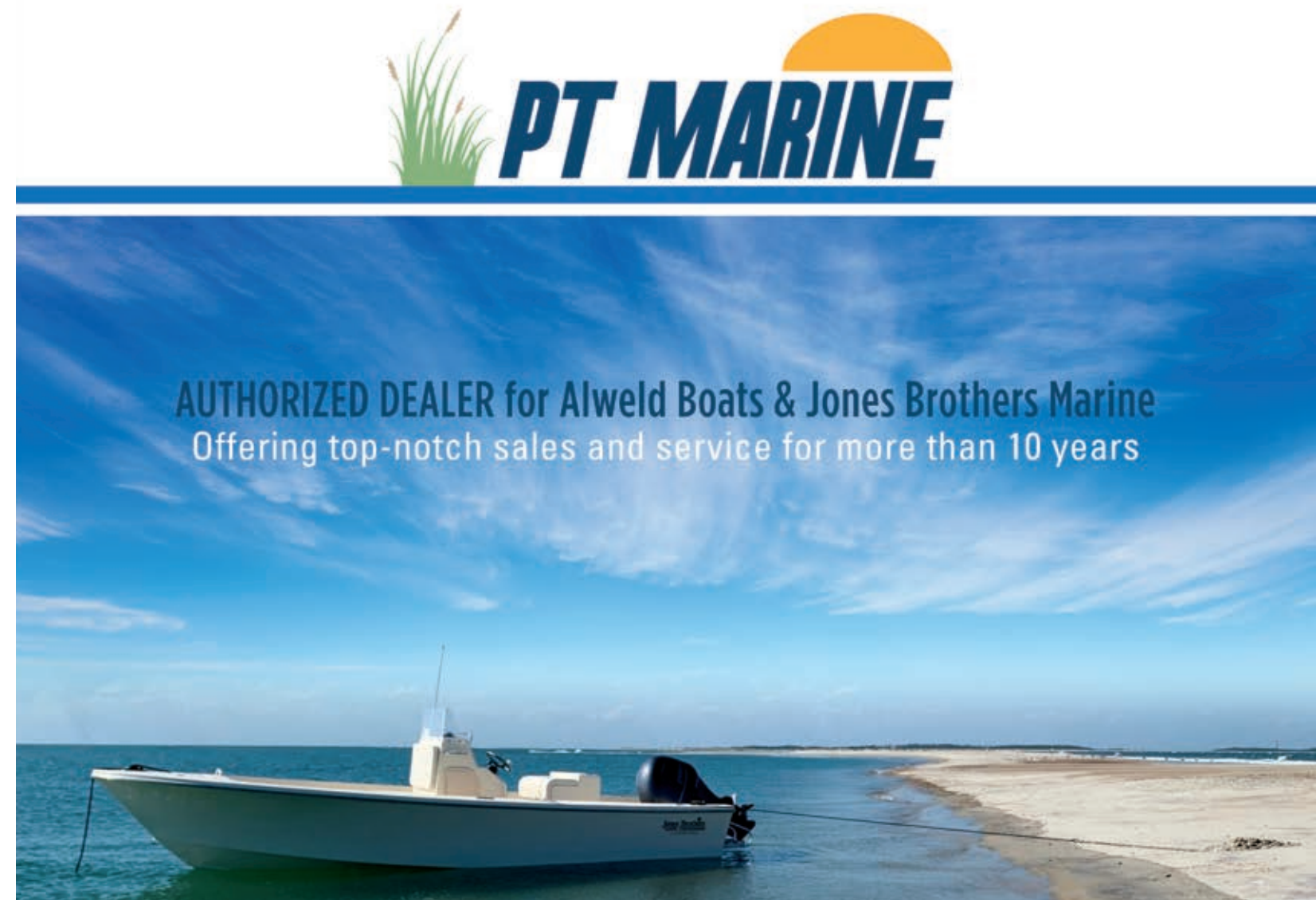


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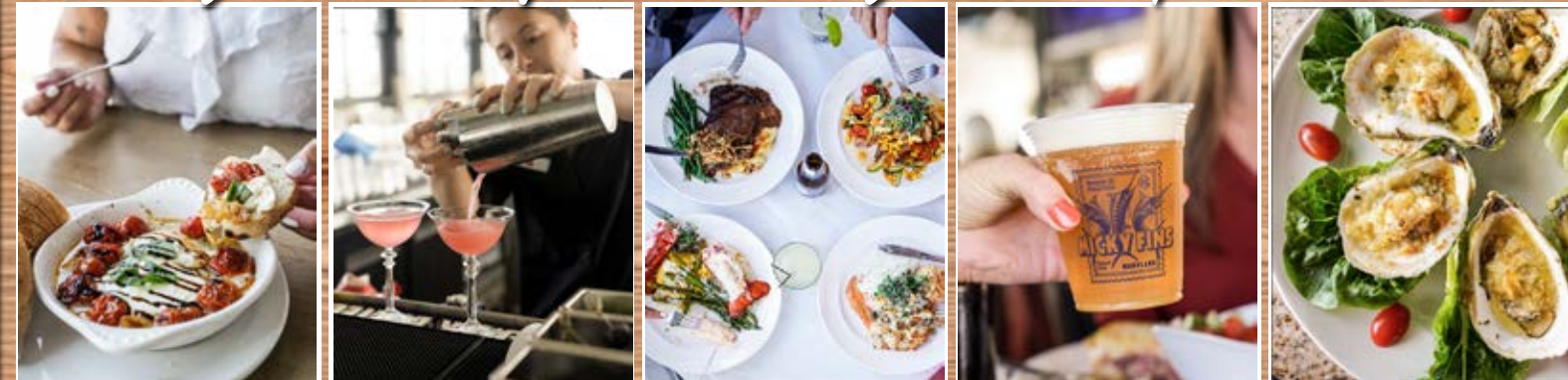


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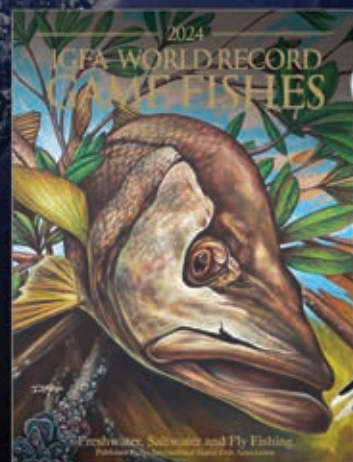
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