

JCAA NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 2010

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION*
(Published on October 19, 2010)

Monthly Meeting Room Brick Plaza at 270 Chambers Bridge Rd "WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"

JCAA REGULAR MEETING:

Tuesday October 26th, 2010

Starting at 7:30 PM

At Brick Plaza at 270 Chambers Bridge Rd

NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, November 11th, 2010

Starting at 7:30 PM at JCAA Office

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.

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JCAA Newspaper Publisher Tom Fote

JCAA Newspaper Editor Paul Turi

This publication is printed and mailed one week prior to each regular monthly meeting of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association. One of the prime goals of JCAA is to get accurate information into public hands as soon as possible.

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**JCAA General Membership Meetings are for club representatives and invited guests only. These meetings are not open to the general public. If you would like to attend as a guest, call the President at (732) 929-2591 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**

### 2010 OFFICERS

|                            |               |              |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>President</b>           | Mark Taylor   | 732-929-2591 |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> V.P.</b> | Eileen Smith  | 732-899-2681 |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.</b> | Don Marantz   | 609-259-6368 |
| <b>Treasurer</b>           | Doug Tegeder  | 732-341-5674 |
| <b>Rec. Sec.</b>           | Tom Siciliano | 609-296-3774 |
| <b>Cors. Sec.</b>          | Paul Turi     | 609-660-2126 |
| <b>Mem. Sec.</b>           | Bruce Smith   | 732-695-3431 |

**Committee & Chairpersons listed on last page**

### IMPORTANT DATES

**October 25<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**October 25<sup>th</sup>** ASA Summit

**November 7<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>** ASMFC Annual Meeting

**November 11<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**November 14<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Sportsperson of the Year Dinner

**November 30<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**December 9<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**December 25<sup>th</sup>** JCAA General Meeting

**January 9<sup>th</sup>** Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar in Atlantic City

## **Sportsperson-of-the-Year**

### **Awards Dinner**

*By Paul Turi, co-chairman*

Don't forget, our Sportsperson-of-the-Year Dinner is November 14<sup>th</sup> at the beautiful Crystal Point Yacht Club in Pt. Pleasant. Individual tickets are \$75.00 each and tables of 10 are \$600.00, a \$150.00 savings. This is a major fundraiser for JCAA. Tickets can be purchased by contacting Dan Miller at 609-641-7821 or by email at [blueangray@comcast.net](mailto:blueangray@comcast.net).

Nominations for sportsperson of the year can be sent to me at [pturi6@comcast.net](mailto:pturi6@comcast.net) or can be nominated on the floor at the October general membership meeting. A short bio of approximately 150 words is required. As of this writing we still do not have a keynote speaker.

This year due to economic conditions it is difficult obtaining donations from the different vendors who have helped us in the past. We are in desperate need of prizes for this year's dinner. We need prizes in value of at least \$25.00 or more. We need door prizes, Chinese auction and silent auction prizes.

Every club and their members patronize different bait and tackle shops up and down the coast. If each club solicited a donation from the

shops that their members patronize on a regular basis, I am sure these shops will help us out as many of them have in the past. Jersey Coast doesn't have the manpower to solicit these shops ourselves. It would be greatly appreciated if your club could solicit these different shops for us and obtain a prize.

In addition to fishing & boating equipment, we do need prizes for the many women who are in attendance at the dinner. Many clubs have a women's auxiliary. It would help us out a lot if the women solicited prizes from stores they frequent on a regular basis also.

If you obtain a donation, please make arrangements with either myself or someone from Jersey Coast to have these prizes picked up. We need these prizes well in advance of the November 14th dinner.

I can be reached at (609) 660-2126.

## President's Report

*By Mark Taylor*

We are coming into the colder months but that does not mean things don't get hot. There are certain species that become more abundant at these times but issues that try to take away our resource are hot all the time no matter the time of the year. It's time for everyone to get more involved with the issues that face us. I am asking for more people to step up and be even more active in this organization. We have our election coming up in December, so if you are interested contact Don Marantz at 609-259-6368. There are many different ways that you can get more active in JCAA, as an individual or a club. Please attend the next meeting for more details.

We are looking for a **Fluke Tournament Director** for next year. If you are interested please contact me by email to [mtsport64@aol.com](mailto:mtsport64@aol.com).

There were two letters submitted by JCAA since the last newsletter. The topics of these letters are comments on Addendum II to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan and Petition on Banning Lead. There is a copy of these letters near the end of my column.

At our last General Membership Meeting which was held September 28, 2010 we had two guest speakers from West Marine. They were Odette Intili and John Meisenbacher. They are both from

the flag ship store in Brick. They gave some insight of the history of West Marine and how they are going to be involved in the marine community. I would like to thank them for taking the time to speak to us.

The Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament was held on Sunday, October 3 at Island Beach State Park. The weather was windy but the rain held off until after the whole event was over. There were families and diehard fishermen that enjoyed the day. We had the Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno and her son participate in this year's event. They both fished and she did catch a small fluke which was released. The Lt. Governor and representatives from the sponsors handed out the prizes and this year's Governor's Cup Winner to Gary Grimm from Flanders, NJ. He caught a striped bass that was 30 1/2 inches long. I would like to congratulate all the people that participated in this year's event and all those that donated their time and prizes. This tournament is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife and Division of Parks and Forestry, the New Jersey Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Jersey Coast Anglers Association, and the New Jersey Beach Buggy Association.

Our next fundraising event will be our **Sportsperson of the Year Dinner** which will be held on November 14th at Crystal Pt. Yacht Club in Pt. Pleasant.

We have received one nomination at the time of this newsletter so that bio is published at the end of my report. We are still accepting Member club nominations for this important honor. Please send a short bio of 150 words explaining the accomplishments of the nominee to the JCAA Office. Nominations will be accepted at the October 26<sup>th</sup> General Meeting.

The JCAA Youth Education Committee is accepting nominations for the 2010 Youth Education Award. Please submit your nominations by October 25, 2010. Submit your nominations in writing to JCAA Youth Education Committee, [gkucharews@aol.com](mailto:gkucharews@aol.com)

It is not too early for your club to start talking about getting a table for this great event. Let all of us together make this event a great success. Look for more information in future articles from our Dinner Committee in the newspaper.

As I mentioned in past newsletters, the Newspaper Committee is looking for clubs to send in

a 500-word description about your club including who you are and what you do. Send it in by e-mail in an MS Word File to [jcaa@jcaa.org](mailto:jcaa@jcaa.org) with the stipulation that we will be using these highlights in the order that they are received and they will be published in the JCAA newsletter. So send in a description and promote your club and possibly get new members that live or fish in your area. They can be sent to Mark Taylor at [mtsport64@aol.com](mailto:mtsport64@aol.com).

**NOMINATION FOR JCAA  
SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR 2010**

On behalf of the Berkeley Striper Club I, Joseph Chrzanowski, delegate, nominate Paul Harris. Paul is a member of the Berkeley Striper Club, (BSC). He is also a member of the New Jersey Beach Buggy Association, (NJBBA) as well as the North Carolina BBA and the Outer Banks Preservation Association. Paul is currently President of the NJBBA and has served on the Board of Directors for 18 years prior. He has maintained a significant goal on trying to keep beach access for the mobile sport fishing people in NJ and other states. He has tried very hard to succeed in these endeavors which is rewarding and has the ability to stand up for what is right and tries to change things that will accommodate everyone.

Paul is also a delegate to Congressman John Alder's Outdoor Sportsman Recreational Committee, The NJ Outdoor Alliance, UMS for the BSC, The NJ Federation of Sportsman Saltwater Registry Committee, the courtesy patrol for the NJBBA at Island Beach State Park, chair for many events such as one he favors which is Hunting & Fishing Day which he started 38 years ago. It is teaching and helping special challenged children fish and how to enjoy the beach. He has done a great job with the Boy Scouts teaching them safety, fishing, knot tying to name a few. He is also an instructor for the "Becoming an Outdoor woman" at IBSP for the past 4 years as well as holding fishing clinics for children and coordinated DAV fishing day.

Paul has volunteered for numerous events such as the youth tournament at IBSP, the Governor's Cup at IBSP for 11 years, beach clean-up at various State Parks in NJ, beach clean-up and snow fence projects, installing string-line fences to protect shore birds and to keep the beaches open for mobile fishing. He is also responsible for the installing of fishing line recycle pipes at IBSP and Bass River with the help of his colleagues. He has

worked with the State of NJ Endangered Shore Birds. He was Capt. of Fishing Team "B" for Hudson & Shanner Fishing tournaments.

Thank you Paul Harris for a job well done. He is an asset to ALL organizations.

**IMPORTANT**

The Next General Membership Meeting will be October 26, 2010 at Brick Civic Plaza, 270 Chambers Bridge Road in Brick.

**Addendum II to Amendment 6 to the  
Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery  
Management Plan**

To: Nichola Meserve  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
1444 'Eye' Street, NW, 6th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

RE: Addendum II to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan  
The Jersey Coast Anglers Association supports Option 1 of Issue 1, Status Quo. The Jersey Coast Anglers Association supports Option 2 of Issue 2, Redefine Recruitment Failure.

We ask that ASMFC adopt Option 1 for Issue 1, Status Quo and Option 2 for Issue 2, Redefine Recruitment Failure.

Sincerely,  
Mark Taylor  
President

**Letter Regarding  
Petition on Banning Lead**

To: Environmental Protection Agency  
Att. Lisa P. Jackson  
Ariel Rios Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.  
Washington, DC, 20460

From: Mark Taylor, President  
Jersey Coast Anglers Association  
Toms River, NJ 08753

## **Subject: Petition on Banning Lead**

I believe the proposed ban on the use of lead in recreational fishing tackle is not justified. The ban on the use of lead in all fishing items goes far beyond what was included in the original petition.

The reason for the ban is not supported in the petition or by any other peer-reviewed scientific data. It is alleged that recreational fishing gear has sometimes resulted in waterfowl becoming sick due to the presence of lead items in their digestive system. The petition estimates that less than 1% of waterfowl are sickened by consuming lead fishing gear lost by anglers. The data offered by the petition only indirectly suggests that lead fishing gear is the cause of waterfowl deaths. The petition data does not support banning lead in recreational fishing products.

The impact on anglers would be great. It would also cause suppliers of recreational terminal tackle great economic impact in a current poor business climate. The resulting business failures and loss of jobs would sharply increase. This would negatively impact our national economic recovery.

Many angler products are painted, coated or plated with a metal that totally covers the lead component. This makes many recreational fishing products totally non-toxic.

I request you not impose any ban on lead in recreational fishing gear now or in the future.

Sincerely,  
Mark Taylor  
President of Jersey Coast Anglers Association

## **Fisheries Management & Legislative Report** *By Thomas Fote*

I will be attending the ASA Summit in Ft. Lauderdale and the ASMFC Annual Meeting in Charleston. I am always hopeful that we can accomplish good things to promote the marine resources and protect the people who are dependent on these resources. I am always optimistic that people will do the right thing. Even though I have been disappointed at the results of some of the

meetings I have attended, I remain committed to the process. Sometimes I feel like Don Quixote chasing windmills. Now it looks like the windmills are moving offshore. I think what keeps me going is that, in the 30 years I have been involved, I have met a lot of good people who have the same goals I do. I think sometimes we disagree on the implementation but agree on the outcome we hope for. JCAA needs an infusion of young blood. We need people with the energy and enthusiasm that will make a difference. Many of us are getting older and for a variety of reasons are no longer able to invest the same time and energy. This is true of JCAA and many of our member clubs. You need to get involved with your local fishing club. The rewards are great and you are protecting the future for your children and grandchildren. It is time to step up to the plate.

### **Striped Bass**

Nothing has changed since last month. We will be voting on Addendum 2 at the ASMFC Annual Meeting. Hopefully, the states that voted to increase the commercial quota before public hearings will change their vote. I will keep you posted.

### **Striped Bass Draft Addendum II**

This Draft Addendum proposes two changes to the striped bass management program: (1) an increase in the coastal commercial quota, and (2) revising the definition of recruitment failure based on Technical Committee advice.

### **Weakfish**

*(Reprinted from the October JCAA Newspaper)*

Last year after the weakfish stock assessment was approved through peer review, we decided we needed to take action. By any form of stock assessment, this stock is in dire shape. Even though strong management measures were in place for 15 years, the stock began to reverse itself and go in a negative direction. If this was a stock managed federally, we would be in a moratorium. When we went to public hearings, the recreational community and most of the commercial community (with some southern exceptions) were supporting a moratorium. I voted to include an option to allow one fish recreationally and a 100 pound bycatch. The only reason I did this was all the stock assessments and all the advice from the technical committee suggested that the problem was not fishing pressure. The

problem is some unknown natural mortality. I knew recreational anglers would not target weakfish for one fish and commercial fishermen would not direct a trip to return with 100 pounds. The reason I supported this is that it would allow an angler to keep one fish. It also would allow the commercial fishermen who landed weakfish unintentionally while fishing for other species to keep and sell the bycatch rather than throwing it back with 100% mortality. This was not a percentage reduction. Essentially this vote closed the fishery with the two small exceptions.

To my surprise, at the next weakfish board meeting, North Carolina presented a proposal to use conservation equivalency to allow 10% bycatch up to 1,000 pounds. They justified this proposal by saying it would achieve a similar reduction to the original proposal. I have never seen more voodoo math in my life. Regardless of the math, there was never any discussion about conservation equivalency before the original vote. The original discussion was either a complete moratorium or allow for a minor bycatch fishery. The National Marine Fisheries Service has been unbending on overfishing definitions and on implementing draconian reductions on the recreational community or allowing no increase on stocks that are recovered. I could not believe they would support this North Carolina proposal. But they did. I could not believe several other states that previously supported a moratorium because of the outcry from the commercial and recreational anglers would support this North Carolina proposal. But they did. The North Carolina proposal passed and you can check out the votes below. If you read through the record you will notice that I spoke in opposition to this proposal. New Jersey, Delaware and New York spoke out against this proposal. I was really disappointed that the US Fish and Wildlife Service did not say a word against the proposal even though historically they supported the moratorium. They did vote no but I expected more active opposition. I can only speculate.

I feel I must apologize to the public since I made the original motion. I should have simply supported the moratorium. I got snookered but I have learned from my mistake. What I found most disappointing was that my original motion sought to accommodate North Carolina and Virginia and they bit the hand that fed them. It will be a long time before I am so accommodating again.

## **Shad and River Herring**

As I stated in last month's JCAA Newspaper, some states think a moratorium clearly does not actually mean a moratorium. Instead it means we should allow a bycatch since the fish will be caught any way in a pound net fishery which can release fish alive. What a moratorium means will be debated again in Charleston at the annual meeting. If this reinvention of a moratorium comes to pass, it would allow a bycatch in pound net fisheries which could be a huge catch, while forcing other states to completely close their recreational catch even though the numbers are negligible. It would also force states to close their directed fishery as well. The issue is clearly not "fair and equitable" for everyone. It is "every man (or state) for himself." This is not what the compact intended. Hopefully, we will see a different result than the weak fish travesty.

## **Barnegat Bay Bills**

I serve on the policy committee of the Barnegat Bay Partnership. I also serve on the advisory committee representing JCAA. I have been involved with protecting Barnegat Bay and the other bays and estuaries in New Jersey for over 25 years. I have seen many initiatives like C-1 designation for streams. These are positive attempts to deal with the ongoing problems in our waters. Senator Bob Smith and Assembly John McKeon are the sponsors of this new legislation and chairs on their respective environmental committees. They have invested a great deal of time and energy to craft the legislation listed below and deserves our thanks and our support. They both have summer homes on Barnegat Bay and understand what needs to be done to correct the deterioration of Barnegat Bay. They don't have any agenda but to do what is best for Barnegat Bay.

Listed below are the six bills that are currently in the NJ State Legislature. These bills have bipartisan support and would be a good start to deal with problems in Barnegat Bay. Some of these bills will also have a positive impact on all of the other lakes, rivers and bays in New Jersey. That is particularly true of the fertilizer bill. These bills are works in progress and we won't know the final impact until the bills are passed. We need you to write to your legislators in favor of these bills. We have also not heard how Governor Christie views

these bills. Please contact his office as well in favor of each of these bills.

We need to be vigilant in our support of the original intent of the legislation and not allow other interests to water down the impact of these bills. For example, one of the current bills addresses the practice of applying fertilizer to your lawn in ways that have no positive impact on the health of the lawn. Lawns do not need fertilizer in the winter. This attempt to create more work and charge you more money is not a good reason to diminish the positive impact of this legislation. Let's keep your eyes on the real objectives and not fall prey to the phony arguments.

**S1411/ A2290 - Establishes standards for certain fertilizer applications, provides for certification of professional fertilizer applicators, and regulates sale and labeling of certain fertilizers.**

Senate sponsors

Smith, Bob as Primary Sponsor  
Beck, Jennifer as Primary Sponsor  
Connors, Christopher J. as Co-Sponsor  
Singer, Robert W. as Co-Sponsor  
Ciesla, Andrew R. as Co-Sponsor

Assembly Sponsors

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Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. as Co-Sponsor  
Brian E. Rumpf, as Co-Sponsor  
DiAnne C. Gove, as Co-Sponsor  
Connie Wagner, as Co-Sponsor

**S1410/A2501 - Requires State Soil Conservation Committee to adopt standards concerning soil restoration measures. \***

Senate Sponsors

Bob Smith, as Primary Sponsor  
Christopher Bateman, as Primary Sponsor  
Robert W Singer, as Co-Sponsor  
Christopher J. Connors, as Co-Sponsor

Assembly Sponsors

Upendra J. Chivukula, as Primary Sponsor  
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Joan M. Voss, as Co-Sponsor  
Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. as Co-Sponsor

**S1815/ A2577 - "Ocean County Stormwater Management System Demonstration Act."**

Senator Bob Smith as Primary Sponsor

Assembly Sponsors

John F. McKeon as Primary Sponsor

Peter J Barnes, III as Primary Sponsor  
Patrick J Diegnan, Jr. as Co-Sponsor

**S-1856 / A-2501 - Authorizes measures by Ocean County Planning Board for control of stormwater runoff and nonpoint source pollution.**

Senator Bob Smith as Primary Sponsor

Assembly Sponsors

John F. McKeon as Primary Sponsor  
Peter J Barnes III, as Primary Sponsor  
Patrick J Diegnan, Jr. as Co-Sponsor

**S2275 - Directs DOT to study stormwater basins in Barnegat Bay watershed.**

Senate Sponsors

Bob Smith as Primary Sponsor  
Christopher Bateman as Primary Sponsor

**S2341/A3415 - Requires DEP to adopt total maximum daily loads for Barnegat Bay.**

Senator Bob Smith Primary Sponsors

Assemblyman John F. McKeon as Primary Sponsor

**ASMFC 69th Annual Meeting Agenda**

November 7 - 11, 2010

The Francis Marion Hotel

387 King Street Charleston, South Carolina 29403

Phone: 843/722-0600

**PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

**November 7, 2010**

2:00 - 6:00 PM

Registration

7:00 - 9:00 PM

Welcome Reception

**November 8, 2010**

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Atlantic Herring Section

10:15 AM - 12:15 PM

Atlantic Menhaden Management Board

1:15 - 2:45 PM

Horseshoe Crab Management Board

3:00 - 6:00 PM

Shad & River Herring Management Board

**November 9, 2010**

8:00 - 9:00 AM

Executive Committee

9:15 - 11:15 AM

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Action Plan Workshop

Noon - 4:00 PM

Law Enforcement Committee

Noon - 4:00 PM

Management and Science Committee

2:00 - 4:00 PM

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council

6:00 - 9:00 PM

Dinner at Fort Johnson

**November 10, 2010**

8:00 AM - Noon

Registration

8:30 - 10:00 AM

Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board

|                     |                                              |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 8:30 AM – Noon      | Law Enforcement Committee (continued)        |
| 8:30 AM - Noon      | Management and Science Committee (continued) |
| 10:15 AM - 12:15 PM | ISFMP Policy Board                           |
| 12:30 – 1:30 PM     | Captain David H. Hart Award Luncheon         |
| 1:45 - 2:15 PM      | ISFMP Policy Board (continued)               |
| 2:15 - 2:45 PM      | Business Session                             |
| 3:00 - 6:00 PM      | American Lobster Management Board            |

**November 11, 2010**

|                     |                                                         |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 8:00 - 10:30 AM     | Spiny Dogfish & Coastal Sharks Management Board         |
| 10:45 AM - 12:45 PM | Tautog Management Board                                 |
| 12:45 - 1:15 PM     | Lunch for Commissioners and Proxies                     |
| 1:15 - 1:45 PM      | ISFMP Policy Board (continued)                          |
| 1:45 - 2:00 PM      | Business Session (continued)                            |
| 2:00 - 4:00 PM      | South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board |

**NEW JERSEY OUTDOOR ALLIANCE REPORT**

*By John Toth*

On behalf of the JCAA, I attended a September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) and the following issues were discussed.

Mr. Henri Aymonier gave a presentation on how the NJOA can have a fundraiser by having its membership enroll with an energy supplier called Viridian. Due to deregulation in the electrical industry, users can choose energy suppliers like Viridian instead of regular suppliers like JCP&L or PSE&G for their electrical needs and lower their monthly bills. Organizations like the NJOA can receive money (\$2) for each member that signs on with Viridian. No decisions were made to go with Viridian. NJOA staff will review the merits of this type of program.

Mr. Jonathan Sauers, Show Director of ASA/ Eastern Fishing & Outdoor Exposition, LLC talked about the various hunting and fishing shows that are coming up next year that will be of interest to all hunters and anglers. He also indicated that he wants to work with the NJOA to get the word out to sportsmen on critical issues facing us like the banning of lead for use in sinkers in saltwater fisheries. We need to know these type of threats that we face so that we can be better prepared to overcome them.

NJOA Chairman, Anthony Mauro, reported that it was hard in the past to get the ears of the prior administration in Trenton on important issues. This situation has now changed with the present

administration in power. The NJOA is now asked for its advice on hunting, fishing and forestry issues. In essence, the NJOA had to work from the bottom up and now it is working from the top down with the administration in Trenton. Much of this change is due to the NJOA's reaching out to numerous legislators to explain its position on various hunting and fishing issues. NJOA's representative Tom Connors is organizing a Legislative Caucus on October 18<sup>th</sup> for this purpose.

The NJOA is working with our state DEP to work out the details of forming future artificial reefs. The U.S.S. Radford, a 563 foot destroyer, is being prepared to be sunk to form the biggest artificial reef on the east coast. It is now docked in Philadelphia and its former crewmembers were recently invited to see it before it gets towed out to sea and sunk. Three states, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey, shared in the cost to prepare the Radford to be used as an artificial reef and its new location will be readily accessible to anglers from all three states. Kudos go to Mr. Bill Figley who first brought the availability of the Radford to the attention of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association and the JCAA petitioned our state's former EPA Administrator, Lisa Jackson, to pursue the US Navy in obtaining the decommissioned USS Radford for use as an artificial reef. Bill Figley is largely responsible for NJ's artificial reef program.

**Mercury Levels in Saltwater Fish Caught by New Jersey's Recreational Anglers: Low Risk from Most Species**

*By Joanna Burger and Michael Gochfeld*

In the early morning fog on Barnegat Bay Inlet, we watch fishermen gather in small boats, each one with two or three fishermen. Even the faint chill cannot dampen the thrill of fishing, the faint swell of the surf, and the freedom of the open water. Common Terns drift low over the gentle swells searching for schools of Bluefish, whose own feeding will drive schools of small bait fish to the surface where the terns can catch them. When the terns begin to coalesce into a dense swirling flock, dipping toward the water, the fishermen take note and begin to move toward the action. The bait fish, Anchovies, Silversides, or Herrings, are trying to avoid the voracious bluefish feeding from below, and the terns diving from above. Terns dive downward from the thick mass of swirling birds, each successfully plucking a fish

from the frantic school swirling at the surface, forced up by a hungry school of Bluefish just below them. The terns flash white as they gather and dive, flashes that can be seen from miles away by other terns and by fisherman. We've enjoyed the frenzy ourselves, pulling up a Bluefish on every rod before the fish and birds disperse. Of course electronic fish finders and GPS have supplemented tern-watching, as clues to locating fish schools.

We have spent the last twenty-five years studying mercury, lead, cadmium and other metals in fish and wildlife, often near heavily contaminated sites, like Superfund waste sites, former nuclear weapons factories of the Department of Energy sites, and contaminated harbors and bays. For the last seven years, however, we have been working with the Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA), and the Jersey Coast Shark Anglers (JCSA) to examine levels of mercury in fish caught by recreational fishermen along the Jersey shore. It is an exciting project because recreational fishing is an important cultural and economic part of New Jersey life.

We've spent a lot of time in recent years at the docks for various New Jersey tournaments, sharing the excitement of the weigh-ins. After admiring the large Mako, Tuna, Striped Bass, Fluke or Bluefish, we ask permission, and take a small, thumb-sized core of flesh from each fish for heavy metal analysis. We have done similar sampling at tournaments around the State and have received samples of other fish from fishermen.

### **Fishing is Important for New Jersey Residents**

Fishing is important to New Jersey, both as a commercial and recreational enterprise worth about \$2 billion annually, as well as contributing to the \$16 billion dollar coastal tourism income. Fish are an important source of protein, and fishing is a popular pastime all over the World, including our urban areas, such as the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area and along the coast. But fish are also our main source of mercury exposure, and we have been studying mercury in fish for many years. Over the years our studies, often involving interviews with anglers fishing along the Jersey shore and in the NY-NJ harbor, have shown that unlike many freshwater fishermen, people fishing along our coasts eat most of the fish they catch. Many fishermen eat more fish than EPA or FDA recognize as "typical". Also there is a wide range of information and interest about mercury in the fish they catch, and many people do not know which fish have low mercury levels, and which have high levels. We started this study to provide information to the fishermen themselves about which fish had high or low levels of mercury, and might pose a risk, particularly to pregnant women and their offspring.

Fish are tasty and nutritious, however, they are also the major source of mercury exposure for the general public, and people who eat fish frequently, "high-end consumers" we call them, and who eat fish that are

high in mercury, may develop symptoms of mercury poisoning. These people are likely to find their way to specialty clinics, like the Clinical Center at New Jersey's Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHHSI), where we work. These cases (mostly stemming from eating commercial fish and tuna sushi) prompted us to investigate the levels of mercury in a variety of fish. It is well known that certain predatory fish such as Shark, Swordfish, and large Tuna, are high in mercury, but which fish are low in mercury, we wondered. Now after several years of study and analysis, we have some answers.

### **Benefits and Risks of Eating Fish**

Fish is a good source of protein and nutrients, particularly as an alternative to red meat. Fish offer high quality protein, low in cholesterol, and omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) which promote cardiac health and baby development. Over the past 15 years, people have responded to the health benefit messages by eating more fish. Adults who eat fish frequently (once a week or more) generally have lower cholesterol and a reduced risk of heart disease compared to those eating fish less than once a month. Likewise, pregnant women who eat fish are less likely to have low birth weight babies than are those who don't eat fish.

However, contaminants in fish, such as mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), can cause health problems, especially in unborn babies and children. And the mercury in fish counteracts some of the benefits of the PUFAs.

### **Government Agencies and Fish Consumption Advisories**

Different state and federal agencies issue fish advisories telling people a few of the fish species to avoid because of high contaminant levels. The Food and Drug Administration issued advisories based on methylmercury that pregnant women and women of childbearing age who may become pregnant should avoid eating four types of marine fish (shark, Swordfish, King Mackerel, and Tilefish), and should limit their consumption of all other fish to just 12 ounces per week (see FDA.gov website). While this is helpful, it does not tell people what fish they can eat safely.

People who fish or like to eat fish are interested in what fish are low in mercury. It is easy to guess which fish are at the top of the food chain and will be high in mercury (shark, swordfish), but not whether medium-sized predatory fish (Bluefish) or bottom dwellers (flounders) have dangerous levels of mercury. Also, age and size are important because older fish have longer to accumulate mercury than do younger fish. Guessing isn't good enough!

Our research with mercury levels in fish purchased in supermarkets indicated that the levels in



some fish are sufficiently low as to provide little risk, even to high end consumers, while this is not the case for other species. Swordfish and fresh tuna steaks had the highest levels, and were in the range that could potentially provide health problems for unborn babies (see JCAA article on Toxins in Fish, January 2005). People who want to eat fish more often need to know the relative levels of mercury in fish so that they can make their own decisions about which to consume and which to avoid. Our study is aimed at providing this information for recreational saltwater fish.

### Our study of "Mercury in New Jersey Coastal Fish"

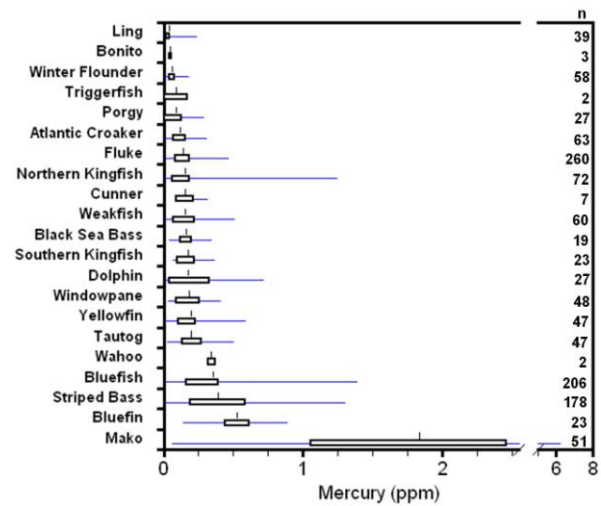
Our objective was to determine mercury levels in fish species commonly caught by recreational anglers in New Jersey's bays, estuaries and the ocean, and to understand whether these levels varied in different parts of the state, or different seasons and how these vary with size of fish. We enlisted both individual anglers and clubs from the Jersey Coast Angler's Association, and from the Jersey Coast Shark Anglers to help us collect a range of different species of fish, with a range of sizes of each type of fish. In many cases, we went to fishing tournaments, and took a small sample for fish at the time of weigh-in, and we also went out with DEP sampling boats to obtain some smaller fish for comparison with those that fit the legal size limits. This study was unique because it involved collaboration between anglers and scientists, between fishing clubs and scientists, and it involved fish that people are actually catching and eating (rather than only those caught by electroshocking, seines, or other trap methods).

Total mercury was then analyzed in our laboratory at Rutgers University and the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute. About 90% of the total mercury in fish is methylmercury, the most highly toxic form of mercury.

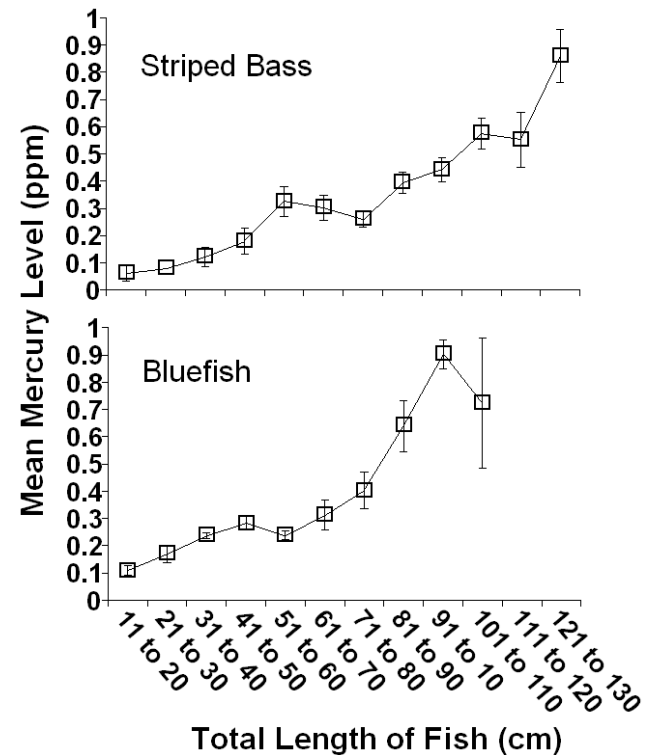
### Findings to Date on Mercury Levels in New Jersey's Coastal Fish

The results for mercury in parts per million (micrograms of mercury per gram of fish muscle) are shown in Figure 1 below. In this figure, the vertical line is the average or mean value, the box represents 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles, the horizontal line indicates the range of values for that species, and the number of fish analyzed (n) is given on the right. Thus for any species on the graph, 25% of the fish had mercury levels that fell below and 25% of the fish were above the small box. It is apparent that for some species, particularly tournament species, we had very large samples that yield quite reliable mercury results, while other species are under-represented. Overall, mercury levels vary by fish species, with some species being consistently high. Large predatory species have higher mercury levels than smaller species that feed on plant or invertebrate marine

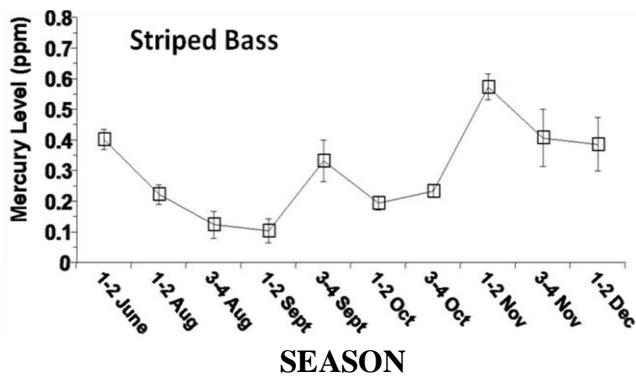
organisms. Mako Shark had the highest levels, followed by Bluefin Tuna, Striped Bass, and Bluefish. The lowest levels were in Ling, Bonito, Dolphin, Winter Flounder, Triggerfish, Porgy, and Fluke.



In general, mercury levels increased with the length (and weight) of the fish for Bluefish, Mako Shark, Striped Bass, Windowpane, Dolphin (Mahi Mahi), Fluke, Southern Kingfish, Ling, Porgy, and Atlantic Croaker. That is within each of these species, larger fish had higher mercury levels than smaller fish, suggesting that given a choice, it is better to eat the smaller fish. The figure below shows the increase in mercury with size for Bluefish and Striped Bass. Fish that are below the legal size range were obtained from NJDEP fisheries trawls.



We also found that mercury levels were generally higher in fish from southern New Jersey, and can vary seasonally, as shown in the following graph for Striped Bass. But we'll write more about that another time when we have more samples.



### Basis for Health Risk Calculation

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration have set a level of 1 ppm of methylmercury in fish. This is not a risk-based level. In our samples only a few Striped Bass and Bluefish, and most Mako, exceeded 1 ppm. Our results are for total mercury of which about 90% is methylmercury. Other agencies provide health-risk based values of how much mercury one can ingest per day with impunity. The Environmental Protection Agency has calculated a Reference Dose for methylmercury of 0.1 microgram per kilogram of body weight per day. In other words, a 70 kilogram (154 pound) adult should be able to consume up to 7 micrograms of mercury per day without adverse effects. At a higher level of consumption, the mercury will accumulate in the body, and is likely to cause symptoms. However, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention uses a more lenient Minimal Risk Level of 0.3 micrograms per kilogram per day, which could be consumed over a 70 year lifetime without adverse effect. This would be equivalent to 21 micrograms per day. There are reasons behind both numbers.

Assuming that a dinner portion of fish weights 8 ounces (227 grams), and that the mercury concentration is only 0.1 parts per million (0.1 micrograms per gram of fish), 8 ounces or 227 grams would provide 22.7 micrograms of mercury, which slightly exceeds the more lenient CDC level. Thus such a "high end consumer" (8 ounces per day) should be eating fish that have even lower mercury levels. There are people who eat 8 ounces of fish per day, although eating fish 3-4 times a week is more common.

Overall, the research shows that many fish taken by NJ fishermen are relatively low in mercury and do not pose a threat. Those that average below 0.1 ppm generally will not pose any threat to people

who eat them 3-4 times a week. In the graph, this includes the species from Ling to Fluke. Among commercial fish, Tilapia and Catfish are examples of species with less than 0.1 ppm on average.

On the other hand, consuming on a regular basis fish with levels over 0.3 ppm (0.3 micrograms per gram) should clearly be avoided by pregnant women and small children. This includes canned white or Albacore. People who eat fish several times a week should choose from the lower mercury species, while an occasional high mercury meal should be OK for adults. The data acquired in this study will allow fishermen and their families to make informed decisions about which species to eat, and how much to eat. We look forward to our continued studies with the fisher people of New Jersey.

This work would not be possible without our dedicated field and laboratory personnel: Chris Jeitner, Mark Donio, Taryn Pittfield, and Sheila Shukla. We thank Tom Fote and Clubs of Jersey Coast Anglers Association, Fred Beigert and Brad Porrior of the Jersey Coast Shark Anglers, the many members of the tournament voluntary committees and of course the many fishermen who allowed us to or requested that we take samples for analysis.

## HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES

*By John Koegler*

### EPA Listing for Bluefin Tuna?

They are at it again! The Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) on May 24, 2010 filed a petition with the NOAA to list Atlantic Bluefin Tuna as Threatened or Endangered under the Endangered Species Act. CBD was also a petitioner in the group that sought a ban on the use of lead in fishing tackle and hunting ammo.

NMFS announces their 90 day finding for a petition to list Atlantic bluefin tuna as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act and to designate critical habitat concurrently with a listing. "NMFS found that the petition presents substantial scientific information indicating the petitioned action may be warranted. They will conduct a status review of Atlantic bluefin tuna to determine if the petitioned action is warranted. To ensure that the review is comprehensive, they solicit information pertaining to this species from any interested party".

## **Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar** **Series comes to Atlantic City!**

Contact 1-800-448-7360

The Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series will kick off its 2011 Tour in Atlantic City on Saturday, January 8. The Trump Marina Hotel & Casino will host the 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. presentation inside their Grand Cayman Ballroom. George Poveromo – Host of George Poveromo’s World of Saltwater Fishing on VERSUS, and Editor-At-Large for Salt Water Sportsman, will headline the program, along with Gary Caputi – Field Editor for Salt Water Sportsman. The Tour is being presented by Sperry Top-Sider.

Joining Poveromo and Caputi in Atlantic City will be –

Captain Scott Newhall – Premier back bay and ocean fluke specialist, fishing the greater Atlantic City waters with his Time Out Charters!

Captain Trey Rhyne – Distinguished authority on fishing for tuna and sharks in the canyons and nearshore waters off New Jersey, and head of Over Under Charters!

Captain Tyler Fruits – Noted inshore and back bay striped bass and fluke pro, and accomplished offshore angler!

Captain Jack Shea – Light-tackle striped bass and fluke fishing specialist with 18-years experience in and around Barnegat Bay, aboard his vessel Rambunctious!

Captain John Sowerby – Cape May-based authority on catching tuna, swordfish and Makos, and inshore sharks, black drum and stripers aboard his charter boat - Hooked Up II! Sowerby is a specialist at jigging for tuna!

Captain Tim Tanghare - Innovative South Jersey captain who specializes in catching trophy striped bass, fluke, drum, bluefin tuna and sharks with Clean Sweep Charters!

Captain Bouncer Smith – Legendary South Florida-based light-tackle captain who has pioneered numerous tactics that take more and bigger inshore and offshore game fish!

Dr. Mitchell Roffer – The nation’s leading authority on locating surface temperature breaks and ocean-circulation features that hold fish!

Courses for the January 8 presentation will focus on Trophy stripers on ultra-light tackle; Live-lining for trophy stripers; Top trolling tactics for stripers; Chunking for bluefish; Bluefish on surface lures; Inshore wire-line techniques; Jetty tactics;

NMFS finding is the first step in a prescribed process for responding to every petition filed with NOAA Fisheries to list a species under the ESA. Their final report is due by May 24, 2011.

Last November at the annual ICCAT meeting their members had to vote on whether to accept a CITIES listing for Bluefin Tuna. A huge majority of their members voted to reject such a CITIES listing.

I will have additional coverage in future JCAA newsletter publications.

As I see it, listing Bluefin tuna would be a total waste of the US Bluefin tuna allocation. There has never been ANY conservation measures imposed by the Europeans or African nations for the last 34 years of ICCAT’s existence. A unilateral US ESA listing equals ZERO conservation since everyone knows that Bluefin are an ocean crossing species.

But to “designate critical habitat concurrently with a listing” would as I understand an ESA listing close the waters where Bluefin usually are found to all types of fishing.

Would this mean the total closure of offshore and Canyon water to all types of HMS fishing? This would be the effect of a US ESA listing as I understand the process.

You must make a comment against this listing or accept absurd new regulations being imposed that have zero to do with bluefin conservation. Note that the Center for Biological Diversity has been a frequent petitioner in many actions. This is just another petition so CBD will still get major money from conservation organizations.

If you do not write or e-mail your objections immediately, then do not complain when the conservation wackos win and you lose your fishery.

NMFS has set guidelines for any comment you desire to make. First your comment must be identified by RIN 0648-XW96.Electronic –Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e Rulemaking portal <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments,

Mail or hand deliver to: Assistant regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA, 01930

**PLEASE RENEW YOUR  
JCAA CLUB & INDIVIDUAL  
MEMBERSHIP**

## New Jersey Beach Buggy Association

How to catch more and bigger fluke; Targeting trophy fluke; Top southern tactics for jumbo fluke; Secrets of fishing the Cape May Rips; Trophy drum in Delaware Bay; Secrets of fishing Delaware Bay; Top tactics for big blackfish; Catching blackfish by the score; No-nonsense weakfish tactics; How and where to locate weakfish; Variety fishing in and around inlets; How to locate and fish productive bottom (blackfish, sea bass, spot and fluke); Back-bay stripers; Can't-miss tuna-trolling patterns; Chunking for tunas; Live-baiting for tunas; Advanced methods for bluefin and yellowfin tuna; Cutting edge lure-trolling tactics; Subsurface offshore trolling; Cutting edge spreader bar and dredge tactics; Secrets for catching more inshore tuna; Reading water temperature charts; Targeting trophy makos; Basic and advanced sharking techniques; Offshore kite fishing for sharks and tuna; Specialized tactics that take more big-eye tuna; How to troll up more wahoo and white marlin!

A ticket to the Seminar Series costs \$ 55.00, and includes a comprehensive Textbook, a One-Year subscription or extension to Salt Water Sportsman Magazine, One Roffer's Ocean Fishing Forecast Analysis (offshore tuna, dolphin and marlin only), a 16-ounce bottle of OrPine Wash & Wax, One spool of Sufix fishing line, and a \$ 20.00 discount card to Capt. Harry's Fishing supply (based on a purchase of \$ 150.00 or more).

The names of all attendees of the Atlantic City seminar will be entered into the Grand Prize drawing to win an incredible bonefishing excursion to the Bimini Sands Resort and Marina. The drawing will be held at the conclusion of the seminar that day, and one lucky person will win the trip for two! In addition, the names of all attendees from the 2011 Seminar Series Tour will be entered into the drawing for the Super Grand Prize - a brand new Mako 18LTS Light Tackle Skiff! The drawing for the boat will take place one week after the completion of the final seminar on the tour, and one lucky winner will take home the boat!

To order tickets by phone with a major credit card, call 1-800-448-7360, or to order on-line visit: [www.nationalseminarseries.com](http://www.nationalseminarseries.com).

**Join Us At JCAA Sportsperson-  
Of-the-Year Dinner  
November 14<sup>TH</sup>**

Please allow me to introduce you to the New Jersey Beach Buggy Association. NJBBA was founded in 1953 and incorporated in 1954 by a small group of surf fishermen, lead by Mr. Jeff Paul. These men saw the need to protect beach access for future generations and were well aware of the very real possibility of threats to that access. Throughout the fifty-seven years that have followed, many others just like those founding fathers have guided the association to where it is today. Not only one of the largest and most recognized beach buggy associations in the United States, but an organization that not only protects beach access, it also has a lot of community involvement.

Through the years the NJBBA has set in place many educational and recreational events in the interest of providing members and non members alike continued access and recreation. Some of these include the annual youth surf fishing tournament to assist our future beach users to find alternative activities. Two yearly take-a-veteran fishing days to give our disabled veterans a day out of their normal surroundings to enjoy the freedoms that they fought for. In celebration of National Hunting and Fishing Day, as proclaimed by President Richard Nixon, we give some very special children the opportunity to get out on the beach and enjoy the day.

The scholarship program, named after our first president, The Jeff Paul Memorial Scholarship is given yearly to a worthy student. Not the least of our programs is the Courtesy Patrol which patrols the beaches in their own personal vehicles in an effort to assist others with any problems or questions they may have. As well as maintaining these programs, the main goal and vision of the association still remains the same, to obtain and maintain beach access for today and into the future. We do this through our members with constant vigil and membership in other associations such as the United Mobile Sportfishermen, Jersey Coast Anglers Association, Recreational Fishing Alliance, and many others.

I would like to welcome you to visit our website at [www.NJBBA.org](http://www.NJBBA.org) and consider becoming a member. Any association is only as strong as its members so join and make it a better, stronger association so that we can continue the goal that those founders had in mind in 1953.