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**March 2025**

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Tuna Tournament - TBD

Tournament Rain Date - TBD

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Hudson River Fisherman's Association, Cresskill, NJ  
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Buggy Membership Info: Ken Hollins 732-814-7021

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[www.manasquanfishingclub.com](http://www.manasquanfishingclub.com)

# JCAA NEWSPAPER MARCH 2025

Official Newspaper of the *JERSEY COAST ANGLERS' ASSOCIATION*

(Published on February 24th, 2025)

**"WORKING FOR MARINE RECREATIONAL ANGLERS"**

## JCAA REGULAR MEETING

**March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 7:30pm**

Jersey Coast Shark Anglers Building  
385 Herbertsville Rd, Brick, NJ 08724

or via Zoom, for link contact:

[tothjohn@verizon.net](mailto:tothjohn@verizon.net) or [mtsport64@aol.com](mailto:mtsport64@aol.com)

## NEXT JCAA BOARD MEETING

**Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup>**

## OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOC.

PO Box 1191, Wall Branch Post Office  
Wall, NJ 07719

Phone 732-506-6565 Fax 732-506-6975

**Publisher Tom Fote, 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 908-913-0551 or Tom Fote at (732) 270-9102 before the meeting date to ask permission.**  
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### 2024 OFFICERS

<b>President</b>	Mark Taylor	732-245-9445
<b>1<sup>st</sup> V.P.</b>	Stephen Machalaba	908-588-1426
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.</b>	Don Marantz	908-347-1434
<b>Treasurer</b>	Doug Tegeder	732-575-2661
<b>Rec. Sec.</b>	Karen Noe	732-245-2751
<b>Cors. Sec.</b>		
<b>Mem. Sec.</b>	John Toth	732-656-0139

*Committee and Chairpersons listed on last page*

## IMPORTANT DATES

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

**February 26<sup>th</sup>-March 2<sup>nd</sup>** Atlantic City Boat Show

**March 13<sup>th</sup>** JCAA Board Meeting

**March 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>** NJ Saltwater Fishing Expo

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

**May 18<sup>th</sup>** Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

## President's Report

*By Mark Taylor*

Congratulations to all the newly elected JCAA Officers. These individuals need all your help to make this association a powerful one. They cannot do it alone. If you can be a dedicated and active club representative, be part of one of the committees or attend the meetings/events, this all helps. Many individuals need to get involved before it is too late, and the future of recreational fishing will be a thing of the past for our kids and us. The more that gets involved the more voice we have in the process and the future.

It is a remarkably busy time with fisheries management. There are a few meetings that are happening that can and will change the way fishery management of many species, plus the way they are looking to divide quotes. If you really care about what happens and be a part of the process to get what you think is right. You need to be at all these meetings before it is done. There is NJ Public Hearing 6PM to 8PM on February 25th, dealing with Recreational Sector Separation and Data Collection Amendment. This is the same night that JCAA has its General Membership Meeting. The public hearing is an especially important topic that you all need to be aware of and attend. This is why I am having the JCAA General Membership Meeting starting at 8PM virtually only. There will be no in-person that night. I stress you need to attend the NJ Public Hearing. Then attend the JCAA meeting afterwards.

There are things that happen with Atlantic Striped Bass. As I mention in last month's newsletter, back in December the ASMFC – Atlantic Striped Bass

Management Board held a meeting to the regulations for both Commercial and Recreational for 2025. JCAA Atlantic Striped Bass Committee with the Chairperson Paul Haertel will be actively following all the things happening with this species. If you are interested in being on this committee, contact Paul Haertel (732-943-8201) or [anglerpmh@aol.com](mailto:anglerpmh@aol.com) immediately. Read articles by Paul Haertel in this issue in this and future JCAA Newsletters.

2025 Introductory Fisheries Science for Stakeholders (IFISSH) Course is currently in progress. The first few classes were highly informative. This course runs until April 8th, I am sure if you are interested in participating contact Dina Baudo (Administrative Assistant, RCE of Ocean County: [dbaudo@co.ocean.nj.us](mailto:dbaudo@co.ocean.nj.us) or call 732-349-1152) to see what they can do for you. Douglas Zemeckis, Ph.D. who is the County Agent II (Associate Professor) of Marine Extension Agent for Ocean, Atlantic, and Monmouth Counties, County Extension Department Head (CEDH) - Ocean County does an outstanding job putting this course together. You really should not miss this.

#### Show Season:

Unfortunately, I had to make a tough call as President to withdrawn JCAA from having a booth this year at the **Atlantic City Boat Show** due to lack of participation of volunteers. I would like to thank everyone that volunteered. We need more people like you that care and are willing to give up time for something you honestly believe in fighting for. Hopefully, people wake up before it is too late. JCAA is the only Association that currently fights for all recreational fishing communities in which the clubs make the decisions not one individual.

**Saltwater Fishing Expo** March 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> (New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center, Edison, NJ). We need a few more volunteers to work at the booths. I am asking the clubs to ask about their membership if anyone would volunteer their time. I am looking for individuals to volunteer for 4-hour shifts for JCAA at the booth promoting JCAA which is your Association. I will be emailing the show schedules with time slots that need to be filled. By volunteering a shift, JCAA pays for your entry into the show for that day. These shows are important to be at, talk to individuals that fish in our waters and keep them informed. Anyone that can volunteer please contact me on 732-245-9445. The volunteers will be selling 2025 JCAA High Roller

Raffle Tickets at the show and talking to inform individuals of what is happening in New Jersey. If you cannot volunteer at one of the shows you can support JCAA by purchasing a book or two.

JCAA is always looking for more individuals to get more involved with JCAA at all diverse levels. Let me know if you are interested at (732) 245-9445.

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*Get Involved, unite as a community so the future of recreational fishing as we know it will not be gone.*

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**Important Information:** The Next General Membership Meeting is scheduled for **March 25<sup>th</sup>** at 7:30pm, held in person at 385 Herbertsville Rd., Brick, NJ 08724 with a zoom meeting invite (Hybrid Meeting).

## JCAA Comments on Recreational Measures Setting Process

*By Paul Haertel*

2/4/2025

ASMFC and MAFMC,

**Subject:** Addendum XXXVI – Recreational Measures Setting Process

JCAA is an association composed of many clubs throughout our state that represents thousands of recreational fishermen throughout our state. At our meeting on 1/28/25, representatives from various clubs thoroughly discussed Amendment XXXVI for the Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass, and Bluefish Management Plan pertaining to the recreational measures setting process.

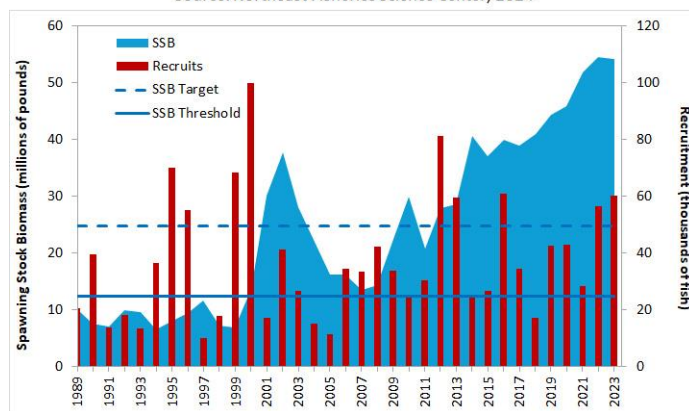
Our member clubs voted unanimously to support Option C, the Modified Percent Change Approach Using the RHL and Harvest. Option A was the way our fisheries were managed for approximately 20 years up until 2023. It resulted in our quotas and regulations being changed each year. Sometimes there were significant changes which made planning trips more difficult. We began using option B, the Percent Change Approach using RHL and Harvest in 2023. We believe it was an improvement from option A as it used confidence level and SSB. It allowed us to maintain our

regulations for a period of two years. We believe that Option C would further improve Option B as it would include several modifications based on lessons learned from the Percent Change Approach. Specifically, it would add a biomass category (i.e., around the target) and treat overfished stocks separately which could possibly allow us liberalization or at least provide us with more opportunities for status quo. This option is based on harvest rather than harvest and catch. It also allows regulations to be set for two years, which is a big help to those who like to plan trips in advance, particularly the for-hire fleet. We do not like option D because it includes catch which is difficult to quantify. Option E is even worse as it not only uses catch but limits us to a 10% liberalization, while at the same time allowing for unlimited reductions.

While we do not know how many people will comment on this addendum, we do not believe that many people will do so as the addendum is very complex and difficult to understand. We would like to suggest that an interpretive statement be added to future documents if possible.

Though perhaps a little off topic we would like to comment on the situation regarding sea bass. It seems that despite overharvesting in just about every year the stock has continued to thrive due in part to above average recruitment. The SSB is currently at 219% above the target and by looking at the chart below it seems that it has been above 200% every year since 2012. Still, we find ourselves battling to just have status quo measures each year. We are told that part of the reason for this is that data indicates a sharp decline in the SSB. Obviously, that data has been incorrect. Further, the ASMFC and MAFMC fail to consider the negative effects that the overabundance of sea bass has on other species. They are voracious feeders that are eating other desirable species such as lobsters, fluke, bluefish, etc. as well as competing with them for available forage species. Further, liberalizing regulations would take some pressure off species we are trying to rebuild such as striped bass. We believe that the SSB should be fished down to near 100% of its target before and stricter regulations are mandated. Overfishing is occurring because the ABC is too low. Specifications need to be changed. In recent years, a number of for-hire vessels and tackle stores have gone out of business due to the ever-increasing restrictions on various species. While tighter regulations may be needed for some species, that is certainly not the case with sea bass.

**Black Sea Bass Spawning Stock Biomass and Recruitment**  
Source: Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 2024



# Fisheries Management & Legislative Report

*By Tom Fote*

## ASMFC Winter Meeting

ASMFC had the winter meeting and the MAFMC had their monthly meeting. I sat in on most of the striped bass meeting and the summary is below. I am still attending MAFAC meetings involving discussions about climate resiliency and recreational statistics.

## Interesting Times

I have been involved in fisheries management since the 70's and with JCAA since the early 80's. I have seen Presidents of both parties come and go and the Congress change from one party to another. I remember when republicans took over the house and senate. Newt Gingrich, as speaker, decided he would do away with the Clean Water Act. At the same time Senator Chafee Sr., also a Republican, said this would never happen. "Over my dead body!" Back then parties could work together to get things done and many of the environmental issues were bipartisan in the old days. Senator Stevens (Alaska Republican) and Senator Inouye (Hawaii Democrat) worked together to get things done for fisheries in the Commerce Committee not caring which party was in control. Those days are gone. I am not sure where the cuts in funding will come from, but I am hoping the environment and fisheries will not get the broad-brush cuts that are planned. I agree that there is waste that can be trimmed but using a chain saw only creates more problems. I am concerned about all the environmental

issues I have worked on for 45 years. I hope I am wrong and there will be some thought behind any cuts. The last few months I have called for increased funding for research on striped bass and the poor recruitment. I also discussed the possibility of hatcheries to supplement the stocks. I will table all that work until we have a better idea of what funding cuts are planned.

We have an election coming up in New Jersey for Governor. We are also electing an entire Assembly. You need to ask the candidates where they stand on the environmental and fisheries issues that are important to you so you can be an informed voter. There are 800,000 recreational anglers in NJ. We can be a powerful vote if we ever begin voting with our issues in mind. That is what the RFA was about and that is what the NJ Outdoor Alliance, NJ State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs and JCAA are trying to do. We need concerned sportspersons to get to the candidates and find out where they stand and report back to us. In JCAA we need the clubs to get their members to do it since JCAA does not have the people to do this.

### **Atlantic City Boat Show**

Mark and I have been on the phone frequently figuring out how to staff our booth at the Atlantic City Boat Show. As Mark points out, if we just had one volunteer from each club in JCAA, we would be fully staffed. The Southern clubs have not stepped up at all this time. After all the years of JCAA doing A booth at the Atlantic City Boat Show Mark has had to cancel. There were too many days when we didn't have a full day of staffing. We can't keep counting on just a few people for all JCAA's tasks. This was an important fundraiser. We sold many raffle tickets there last year. We are going to lose this fundraiser, and we were still in the red last year. JCAA desperately needs young people to step up. Our youngest board members are in 60 and most of us are over 75. We lost the RFA about 2 years ago. We have lost several clubs in the last two years. If something doesn't change, JCAA will be out of business. We have the money to operate for a period of time with our lightened expenses, but we need the volunteers. I know when I go to the Saltwater Expo, I will be asked what am I doing about a number of topics. My response will need to be, what are you doing about it.

### **Striped Bass Board Meeting**

I came into the meeting late. But for the over two hours I was listening to, there was no discussion of research needed to find out what is happening with the low

recruitment in the Chesapeake Bay. Everyone knows it is not the spawning stock biomass. We have been protecting the big fish, but they are just not reproducing. We need to know the reason why. Just putting in stronger regulations on both the commercial and recreational fisheries will not accomplish anything unless we get to the root of the problem. We manage fisheries with models. **The models are designed to look at where we need to cut back to meet certain goals. The models don't consider any other variables other than fishing pressure. They don't consider climate change, pollution, and the pharmaceuticals going into the water that impact the sexuality of the fish.** What these models are doing is projecting failure. ASMFC have imposed lots of reductions in the last seven years and there has been no improvement in recruitment. The only hope I have is that we have had the coldest winter in many years and more snow and rain in some of the spawning areas. I am waiting to see what the sand eel population does since that population thrives in the cold water. I don't know if there will be any support from DC to fund any additional research. I cannot do this job without being an optimist. You have to have thick skin and trust people to do the right thing. I am not as optimistic as I used to be.

## **Meeting Summary of ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board**

*February 4, 2025*

The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board met to review and consider the stock assessment schedule; provide guidance on the scope of Draft Addendum III for 2026 management measures; and consider an Advisory Panel nomination.

The Board reviewed the timeline for the 2027 Benchmark Stock Assessment, which is scheduled for peer review in March 2027 and will be presented to the Board in May or August 2027. Work on the benchmark stock assessment is getting underway with the Data Workshop expected this Summer 2025. The benchmark assessment will include data through 2025, including the re-calibrated MRIP time series expected to be released in Spring 2026. A 2026 stock assessment update is also tentatively scheduled per the typical two-year schedule for striped bass. However, the Technical Committee (TC) and Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) recommend not conducting a 2026 stock assessment update due to overlap with the 2027

Benchmark Assessment. This would result in TC-SAS members working on two assessments simultaneously with potentially different assessment models. Additionally, the results of a 2026 stock assessment update would quickly be replaced by the 2027 Benchmark Assessment only 6-8 months later. The Board agreed with the TC-SAS recommendation and recommended the Policy Board remove the 2026 stock assessment update from the stock assessment schedule.

The Board provided guidance to the Plan Development Team (PDT) on the scope of management options for Draft Addendum III on 2026 measures. Per the Board's motion from December 2024 initiating the addendum, the PDT will consider potential reductions based on projections incorporating preliminary estimates of 2024 removals. The Board requested options be developed for both a 50% and 60% probability of rebuilding stock. In addition, the Board requested sensitivity runs with varying assumptions for recruitment and future fishing mortality past the 2029 rebuilding deadline to provide information about potential future population trends as recent poor year-classes mature and enter the spawning stock biomass. For options to meet a 2026 reduction, the PDT will consider options for sector contributions to the reduction. For any commercial reduction, the PDT will consider commercial quota reductions. The Board added an option to consider requiring commercial tagging at the point of harvest but decided not to address commercial reallocation in this addendum.

For any recreational reduction in Draft Addendum III, the PDT will consider size limit changes and/or season closures, including mode split options, but will not consider possession limit changes as decided by the Board. For recreational size limits, the Board specified consideration of both minimum size limits and slot limits, with no slots narrower than 3" and no ocean size limits below 28". For ocean recreational season closures, options will include no-harvest and no-targeting closures and the Board requested consideration of equity from multiple perspectives, including percent reduction by region, access/seasonality by region, and socioeconomic impacts. The Board requested ocean seasonal closures options with two or three ocean regions, but an ocean region cannot be comprised of a single state. Closures can be split between two Waves, and a coastwide closure option could be considered using this structure of a split closure. The Board also noted the PDT should consider both the shortest possible closure options and

longer closure options at a different time. For the Maryland Chesapeake Bay recreational season, the Board agreed Maryland could explore a possible change to their baseline (status quo) season for review by the TC. At the 2025 Spring Meeting, the Board will consider whether to include a Maryland baseline season option in the Draft Addendum. Finally, the Board added an option to consider standardizing the method to measure total length for striped bass (i.e., pinching the tail).

The Board approved the nomination of Peter Fallon, a charter boat captain from Maine, to the Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel. For more information, please contact Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [efranke@asmfc.org](mailto:efranke@asmfc.org).

## **Motions**

### **Move to exclude recreational mode split options from Draft Addendum III**

Motion made by Ms. Meserve and seconded by Mr. Batsavage. Motion fails (4 in favor, 9 opposed, 3 abstentions).

### **Move to not include options for an ocean recreational size limit under 28" in Draft Addendum III**

Motion made by Mr. Cimino and seconded by Ms. Meserve. Motion passes (13 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions).

### **Move to include the concepts of MD season closure baseline adjustment approach in Draft Addendum III**

Motion made by Mr. Luisi and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion postponed.

### **Move to postpone the motion until the Spring Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Meeting**

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Reid. Motion passes (11 in favor, 3 opposed, 2 abstentions).

### **Motion to include possession limit options in Draft Addendum III**

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion fails (7 in favor, 7 opposed, 2 abstentions).

### **Motion to include possession limit options for for-hire mode split in Draft Addendum III**

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Reid. Motion fails (7 in favor, 7 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to ask the Plan Development Team to investigate reallocation of the commercial quota among the 6 states that currently harvest striped bass from the coastal stock. There would be no increase from the total 2024 quota of those 6 states combined.

Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Reid. Motion fails (2 in favor, 12 opposed, 2 abstentions).

## As Oceans Warm, Predators are Falling Out of Sync with their Prey

by Andrew S. Lewis

*Yale Environment 360*, 1/21/2025 ([link](#))

*In the sea as on land, climate change is driving shifts in the abundance and distribution of species. Scientists are just beginning to focus on why some fish predators and prey — like striped bass and menhaden on the U.S. East Coast — are changing their behavior as waters warm.*

For decades on the U.S. Mid-Atlantic coast, recreational anglers have braved the cold temperatures of late October and November to chase one of the region's most iconic fish species, the striped bass. This season, just offshore of New Jersey and New York, the fall run was especially strong. "The amount of fish and [their size] was really, really high," said Lou Van Bergen, a captain of *Miss Barnegat Light*, a 90-foot party boat out of Barnegat Light, New Jersey. "Every week, all the way through Thanksgiving, you could go out and catch nicer-sized fish."

From the looks of the boat's deck this fall, it would have been easy to assume that striped bass, once overfished to dangerously low numbers on the East Coast, had completed a remarkable comeback. Except that in the nearby Chesapeake Bay and in the Hudson River, where the fish return each spring to spawn, the hatching and maturation of juveniles "has been abysmal," said John Waldman, an aquatic conservation biologist at the City University of New York. Waldman, an avid fisherman himself, called the low levels of striped bass recruitment, or spawning success, in these historically fertile estuaries "a real mystery."

***Warning signs are beginning to be observed in marine ecosystems worldwide, from the North Sea to the Southern Ocean.***

One way to better understand this apparent shift in striped bass recruitment and distribution in the Mid-

Atlantic Bight—the coastal region that stretches from North Carolina's Outer Banks to Massachusetts—is to look at similar shifts in the behavior of one of its key food sources, the Atlantic menhaden, a forage fish in the herring family. In recent years, menhaden have also been seen in high numbers off the New Jersey and New York coasts — Van Bergen described an early November trip in which the ocean surface was thick with menhaden for some 25 miles. But just like striped bass, menhaden numbers in the Chesapeake and other estuaries, where the fish was once reliably abundant, have been low.

"I don't know if this is a larger cyclical pattern, if it's driven by how they're managed, or if it's because the water temperature is increasing," said Janelle Morano, a doctoral student at Cornell University who has been studying how menhaden distribution has changed along the U.S. East Coast over time. "But something is going on, and it is real."

Taken together, the shifts in behavior of these two interconnected species resemble aspects of a phenomenon that is being observed across the planet, from land to sea: phenological mismatch.



Phenology is the seasonal timing of lifecycle events, like spawning and migration. Think of how honeybees emerge from their hives just as spring flowers bloom, or how in autumn, the monarch butterfly migrates south to Mexico as milkweed begins to die off in the United States. Phenological mismatch, however, occurs when these intricate, interspecies relationships fall out of sync due to changes in the environment. Terrestrial cases of phenological mismatch have been well documented. For example, detailed analysis has shown



that, over the past 29 years, monarch migration [has been delayed](#) by six days due to warming temperatures, triggering mismatches with food availability during the journey and failures to reach overwintering sites.

But in the oceans, phenological mismatch has been far less studied. Every scientist interviewed for this story noted that while there has been good research on single-species phenology in marine environments, there remains precious little understanding of multispecies phenological mismatch. The subject, they said, urgently requires more focus because of the potential knock-on effects that mismatches could cause up and down the food chain. They also cautioned that all species, marine and terrestrial, are prone to natural swings in abundance, and that declines or increases can't be pinned to any one stressor. Overfishing and stock management are just two external factors that may be influencing phenological mismatch in the world's oceans. As the authors of a [paper](#) published in *Nature Climate Change* that focused on this lack of knowledge put it, "Given the complexity involved, accurately forecasting phenological mismatch in response to climate change is a major test of ecological theory and methods."

Nevertheless, warning signs are beginning to be observed in marine ecosystems planetwide, from herring and zooplankton in the North Sea, to sardines and bottlenosed dolphins in the Southern Ocean, to — along with striped bass — baleen whales and menhaden in the northwest Atlantic.

***The decline of lobster in the Mid-Atlantic has forced older striped bass to compete for food with younger, more agile fish.***

To be sure, striped bass don't rely on menhaden as critically as monarchs rely on milkweed. But the fish does seem to be responding to shifts in menhaden behavior and abundance and, experts say, both species are likely responding to changes that have occurred in the Mid-Atlantic Bight and the Gulf of Maine over the past quarter-century — in particular, to warming water. Collectively, these ecosystem-wide shifts could be reshaping where and how striped bass and menhaden spawn, move, feed, and, ultimately, interact. How these effects ricochet across the food chain — from impacts on planktonic organisms all the way up to the human communities that rely on fisheries and the marine environment in general for economic and cultural survival — remains largely unknown.

One of the few certainties in the marine ecosystem is that water temperature is on the rise, and

rapidly so in the Northwest Atlantic. For example, between 2004 and 2019, the Gulf of Maine warmed more than seven times the global average, or "faster than 99 percent of the global ocean," as the Gulf of Maine Research Institute puts it. In the southern Gulf of Maine and the Mid-Atlantic Bight, the heating has virtually eliminated one of the striped bass's key food sources, the American lobster. This contraction in prey variety may be negatively impacting striped bass, especially older individuals, which can lack the fitness necessary to chase fast-moving prey, like menhaden and mackerel. The disappearance of lobster has forced them to compete for other resources with younger, more agile fish.



*Striped bass are edging northward along the U.S. East Coast as Atlantic waters warm. SHAUN LOWE VIA ISTOCK*

"Fluctuations in the abundance of prey populations may... drive predators to consume less energy-dense but more abundant prey, leading to declines in predator condition," Robert Murphy, a social scientist at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, and colleagues [wrote](#) in a 2022 study of striped bass feeding behavior. In his observations of striped bass, Waldman has indeed noted a constriction in diet. "It used to be that striped bass would come in small groups along the shore over the whole autumn and eat cockles and eels and crabs and lobster," he said. "But now, it has shifted to this almost complete focus on big aggregations of bait fish."

A similar change in diet is being observed in the Southern Ocean off South Africa, where the annual KwaZulu-Natal sardine run is one of the most spectacular examples of phenology on the planet. As the Southern Hemisphere winter approaches in May, great schools of sardine emerge from deeper water and congregate along the coast of South Africa, moving northward with a current of cold water. Over millennia,

myriad species, from bottlenosed dolphins to sharks, penguins, and gannets, have timed their lifecycles — their survival — to the event.

***Krill have not simply moved north. Instead, they are condensing in cold pockets of water, wherever they may occur.***

But in the past 60 years, the sardines have been arriving progressively later, as their instinct to follow cold water has become confused by the southerly creep of warmer water. As a result, the arrivals of many of the sardine’s predators have fallen out of sync with the feast. Scientists who have studied the KwaZulu-Natal sardine run have hypothesized that this mismatch has diminished the abundance and distribution of Cape gannets and African penguins. According to one study, bottlenosed dolphins have shifted their dietary focus from sardines to mackerel. “When events like this are disrupted, it can have a knock-on effect,” Stephanie Plön, a marine biologist at South Africa’s Stellenbosch University and coauthor of the study [told the BBC](#) in June.



*Larval herring prey on zooplankton, which are growing increasingly scarce in the Northeast Atlantic. SOLVIN ZANKL VIA GEOMAR*

Phenological mismatches like these are also not isolated to the upper levels of the food chain. There are likely reverberations reaching all the way to the base.

In the Northeast Atlantic and in the North Sea, zooplankton and phytoplankton have been declining over the last half-century. For herring, plankton is critical to the success of a given season’s spawning class. In one study conducted in the [North Sea](#), researchers found that the success of herring larvae is closely related to the abundance of zooplankton and phytoplankton, both of which are highly sensitive to temperature. Like the rest of the world’s oceanic

regions, the North Sea is experiencing [significant warming](#). “Although the causal mechanisms remain unclear, declining abundance of key planktonic lifeforms in the North-East Atlantic... are a cause of major concern for the future of food webs,” the authors of another study of North Atlantic zoo- and phytoplankton [concluded](#).

One of the most critical types of zooplankton to the marine food web are krill, a shrimp-like crustacean that everything from whales to penguins to squid and seabirds relies on for survival. In 2021, a team of French and British scientists found that krill have been in [steep decline](#) throughout the North Atlantic. Krill have also not simply moved north in response to the steady creep of warm water toward the Arctic. Instead, they are experiencing a “habitat squeeze” — essentially, they are condensing in cold pockets of water, wherever they may occur. “We would expect the krill populations to simply shift northward to avoid the warming environment,” Martin Edwards, one of the study authors, said. “However, this study shows... in the North Atlantic, marine populations do not simply just shift their distributions northward.”

Dave Secor, a professor of fisheries science at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science’s Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, noted that in recent years in the Mid-Atlantic Bight, the behavior of North Atlantic right whales — whose diet relies heavily on zooplankton — does not cleanly track with what has been termed the “poleward march” theory. “There is evidence that there has actually been a southerly shift in their concentrations,” Secor said. “Oceanography is not linear. Things are happening in fits and starts.” Regarding striped bass in the region, Secor said there clearly has been a shift in the timing of spawning and migration. “The question is whether that can be sufficiently adaptive to the more rapid changes we’ve experienced in recent years.”

Just as the KwaZulu-Natal sardine run is critical to commercial fisheries in South Africa, and the availability of herring in the North Sea sustains cultural culinary traditions in European countries, striped bass and menhaden are critical to local economies driven by recreational fishing in the U.S. Mid-Atlantic and in New England. Ultimately, that means the knock-on effects of phenological shifts and interspecies mismatches will reverberate beyond marine ecosystems and into more entrenched and less dynamic human ecosystems. As Waldman said, the species that might be the least capable of adapting to the changes underway in the oceans might be us. “Some people will

lose the fisheries they grew up on and made their livings from,” he said. “And there may be nothing we can do about that.”

*Andrew S. Lewis is a writer based in New Jersey and a regular contributor to The New York Times Magazine, Outside Magazine, and NJ Spotlight News. He is the author of [The Drowning of Money Island](#).*

## JCAA Membership Report

By John Toth

Invoices for club membership dues are in the process of being mailed to your club along with our JCAA raffle books.

Included with this mailing is a form that needs to be completed so that we have an updated list of your club officers and your club representative to attend our JCAA membership meetings. We use this information to update our files so that we have the correct information about your club. Club officers usually change, especially with the coming of the New Year, and we don't want to send JCAA correspondence to the wrong person.

Please support the JCAA by buying our raffle books and sending your books to us. The JCAA fights for the rights of all anglers who fish in our state, and we need your continued financial support to represent you.

Our next JCAA Membership meeting will be held on **February 25<sup>th</sup>** at the Jersey Coast Shark Anglers Building in Herbertsville starting at 7:30 p.m. in person and also available by ZOOM.

## Youth Education Report

By Greg Kucharewski

### JCAA YOUTH EDUCATION

Look for our JCAA booth at hunting and fishing expos. Stop by the JCAA booth and learn about how you can help protect recreational fishing.



Karen Noe and Don Marantz are selling Kid's Wish'N to go Fish'N towels to help fund our veteran and youth fishing programs. [Become a member](#), volunteer as an associate member to support the voice of recreational anglers.



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### GET NJ HOFNOD CERTIFIED

Visit the NJ Hooked on Fishing not on Drugs [website](#) to view instructor training opportunities, NJ county leader groups, and youth fishing opportunities. (Scroll down to see youth fishing photos.)

### LARGEST SURF TOURNAMENT ALONG THE JERSEY SHORE

Get ready to enter the largest surf fishing tournament along the Jersey Shore. Remember admission to the park is FREE for the tournament. This tournament is scheduled for Sunday, May 18, 2025. Veterans that register must check the veteran box to win the veterans category. The lucky veteran who wins will be asked to prove their veteran status by showing a government issued ID or copy of DD 214. For early registration, [click here](#). Early registration will end April 19, 2025.



**DISABLED VETERANS – FREE MOBILE SPORTFISHING PERMIT**

All eligible disabled veterans can apply for an IBSP 2025 Mobile Sportfishing Permit to drive on the beach. Veterans must supply the following: Form DD 214 Honorable Discharge, Valid NJ Driver License and Registration, Veterans ID Card proof of service-connected disability. If you plan to fish on the beach, you must [register](#) for a Free NJ Saltwater Recreational Registration Card. It is suggested new beach drivers take a beach safety driving course. NJBBA offers a beach driving course at [this link](#). For more information about permits and hours contact: Island Beach State Park, (732) 793-0506. [Visit VVA Chapter 12](#) for Play HOOK-e veteran news and discounts.

**NEWARK BAIT AND FLY CASTING CLUB**

Members of the NBFCC will host a Kid’s Fishing Clinic on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at the Kenilworth VFW 7:00 P.M. Guest speaker, Liz Jackson, Hooked on Fishing-Not on Drugs Program Coordinator.



**NJ TROUT SEASON OPENING DAY**

NJ Fish and Wildlife wanted to let you know that tickets are sold out but you can join the Opening Day waitlist at [this link](#). You will need to do one for each member of your party individually. Please make sure that you completely fill in the form for each person on the waitlist so that we have everyone on the list. If the forms aren’t completely filled in, you will get an email from Eventbrite as well as from Fish and Wildlife asking you to complete it. If you need help with anything you can phone Jessica Garlick at (908) 637-4125 x115.



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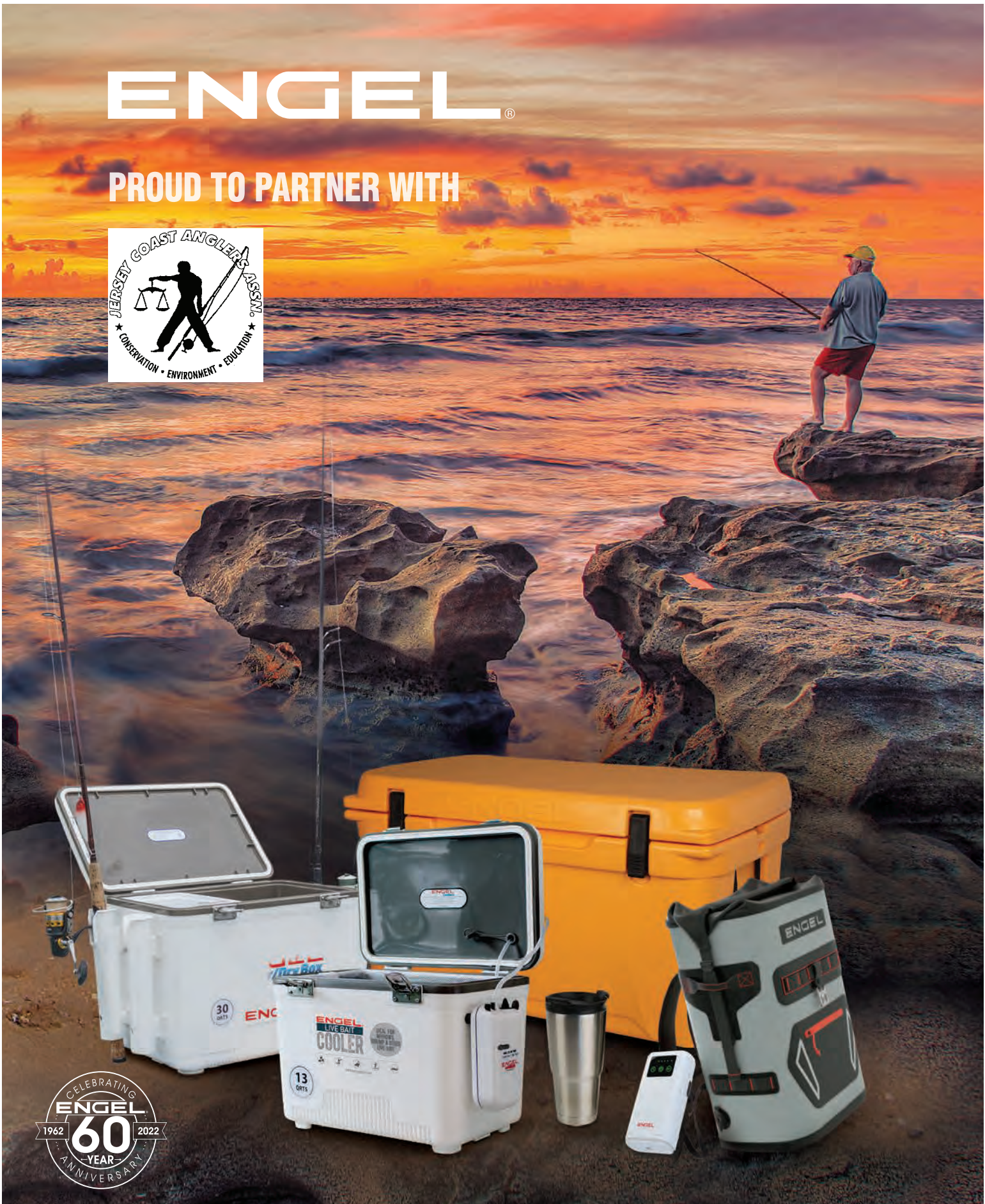
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Membership is now free! Sign up as an Associate Member and receive monthly JCAA News that gives you the most up-to-date news about Fisheries Management and Environmental Issues. If you would like to support the goals of JCAA, please contribute if you are able. Look for the [Subscribe](#) button on the JCAA home page or complete application below.

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<b>Fluke Tournament</b>	<i>Open</i>	-
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<b>Pelagic Species</b>	<i>Open</i>	-
<b>Forage Species</b>	Paul Eidman	732-614-3373
<b>Striped Bass</b>	Paul Haertel	973-943-8201
<b>Science &amp; Research</b>	<i>Open</i>	-
<b>Website</b>	Philip V. Celmer	jcaa@jcaa.org
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