



Weekly Sportfishing Roundup

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24 March 2017

According to the calendar, spring officially began this week. Anglers can look forward to a warming trend over the next month, easing water temperatures into optimal range for newly arriving summer species.

The roller-coaster temperatures created a set-back in water temperatures again this week, and blustery conditions are often keeping boats at the dock. According to the folks at Long Bay Point Bait and Tackle, tautog action slowed in Bay waters, but the forecast of temperatures in the seventies could help turn the bite around. The best action continues to come from the deeper water structures and wrecks, with some tog trips yielding some very nice fish. Remember, the regulations for tautog limit you to three fish per person, stretching to at least 16-inches long. Big seabass will also compete for this same offering on these wrecks, but seabass must be tossed back since they are still out of season until May.

The first reports of flounder catches were short-lived, but once the water stabilizes, anglers will head back to the shallow water and inlets on the Eastern Shore. Hook and line catches of croaker could also happen soon in the lower Bay and in the tributary rivers. After that, the next anticipated debut will be black and red drum.

There are limited reports for speckled trout and puppy drum, but these fish are a possibility in most backwater locations and inlets. This trend should stabilize with the evolution of spring.

Deep droppers can expect good catches if they can make it out. Blueline tilefish, golden tilefish, blackbellied rosefish, and other deep bottom dwellers are available along the ocean floor and near the edge of the Norfolk Canyon. Dogfish continue to pose an incredible nuisance for deep droppers, so expect to weed through plenty of trash fish, as well as a by-catch of out-of-season seabass.

Bluefin tuna continue to please boats working out of Oregon Inlet, with some catches ranging to well over 500-pounds, but watch these regulations closely. Blackfin tuna are also providing some good action out of Carolina.

For more information, go to www.drjball.com