

Outlook

April 2025 Newsletter!

From Fish On Club <fish-on-fishingclub1@80249862.mailchimpapp.com>

Date Sun 4/6/2025 6:22 PM

To fishonclubnpr@gmail.com <fishonclubnpr@gmail.com>



April 2025 Newsletter!

The next general membership meeting is Tuesday, April 8th. Doors open at 6:30, meeting starts at 7:00.

Our guest speaker for the evening will be the owner/s of the Miss Virginia

General Membership Meeting Minutes – March 11, 2025

The meeting was called to order by President Mark Morningstar at 7:05pm.

Our guest speaker was Captain Dave Rieumont who told of many stories that he'd written regarding his involvement with the Make a Wish Foundation. The stories were about kids that were taken fishing and how the experience changed both their lives as well as his.

Our Wish to Fish subsidiary has a trip scheduled for March 13 with Hope Children's Home.

Socials: The next social dinner will be 5:30 Thursday, March 20th at Gulf Harbors Yacht Club.

Our spring picnic is all set for March 29 at Anderson Park on Lake Tarpon.

The redfish tournament winner for February was Jerry Hanes.

Several members told us of their recent fishing trips yielded redfish, hogfish and grunts.

The next general membership meeting will be April 8.

The 50/50 winner was Bill Silk – \$70.

The name tag drawing winner was Carl Mogavero.

Number of members and guests in attendance – 28.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20.

Respectfully submitted,

John Grieder



Tournament update:

2025 FREE FISHING TOURNAMENTS

January 14 – February 10 Longest TROUT 1st, 2nd, 3rd. \$25, \$15, \$10 payout

February 11 – March 10 Longest REDFISH 1st, 2nd, 3rd. \$25, \$15, \$10 payout

March 11 – April 7 Longest KINGFISH 1st, 2nd, 3rd. \$25, \$15, \$10 payout

April 8 – May 12 Longest GROUPER 1st, 2nd, 3rd. \$25, \$15, \$10 payout

May 13 – June 7 Longest SNAPPER 1st, 2nd, 3rd. \$25, \$15, \$10 payout

June 8 – September 8 No Tournaments

September 9 – October 13 Longest COBIA 1st, 2nd, 3rd. \$25, \$15, \$10 payout

October 14 – November 10 Longest HOGFISH 1st, 2nd, 3rd. \$25, \$15, \$10 payout

November 11 -- December 8 Longest SPANISH MACKEREL 1st, 2nd, 3rd. \$25, \$15, \$10 payout

YEAR LONG TOURNAMENT LONGEST FISH (EXCLUDING SHARKS)

\$50.00

RULES

There is no entry fee for these tournaments, your dues constitute an entry fee.

Only Club members may participate for prizes

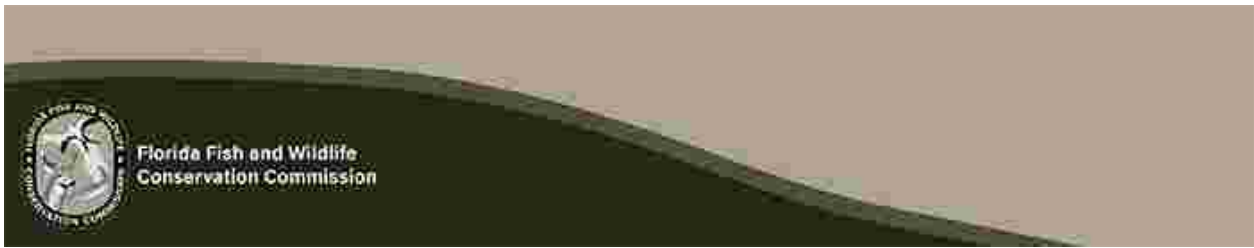
There is no minimum or maximum length for each specie. The fish must be photographed, and entry reported on the Club website within 2 days of the catch

Members may only win 1 place per specie per tournament

Fish must be caught in the Gulf of Mexico between Sarasota and Cedar Key



From the FWC



March 28, 2025

Permit spawning season closure inside the Special Permit Zone starts April 1

The spawning season closure for permit inside the Special Permit Zone in south Florida starts April 1. This closure includes all state and federal waters south of Cape Sable on the Gulf coast, and south of Cape Florida on the Atlantic coast including all of the Florida Keys and Biscayne Bay south of Rickenbacker Causeway.

Permit will reopen inside the Special Permit Zone on Aug. 1.



March 27, 2025



Spiny lobster season closes April 1

The spiny lobster recreational and commercial seasons close to harvest in state and federal waters starting April 1, and will reopen Aug. 6. The two-day recreational sport season is the last consecutive Wednesday and Thursday of July, which is July 30 and 31 this year.

April - June 2025



Our Purpose: To identify excellent Florida freshwater fishing opportunities and to provide anglers with relevant information that will enhance the quality of their outdoor experience.

[TrophyCatch Tracker](#)



TrophyCatch angler Alie Abrell caught this 10-pound Marion County bass while fishing with Trophy Bass Expeditions with Captain Sean Rush. Some of Florida's best trophy bass fishing is still happening right now!

As this newsletter goes out the peak month for TrophyCatch submissions — March — has just passed, but April still offers excellent odds for a big bass. The weather also remains mild for the early part of this quarter, so prioritize your outings

accordingly. However, the old adage that "The best time to go fishing is when you can" still holds true, and if TrophyCatch has documented one thing it's that anyone might catch a trophy bass any time here in Florida!



Harry Linsinbigler IV (far left) received a \$1,000 check from 888-BOAT-LAW and other prizing for catching and reporting the first Pink Tag bass during Season 12.

Wrapping up some final accolades from Season 12, Harry Linsinbigler IV was honored at Bass Pro Shops Tampa for catching the first Pink Tag bass during the previous season. He received a \$1,000 check from [888-BOAT-LAW](#), \$500 gift cards from [Bass Pro Shops](#), and \$1,000 codes for shopping at [AFTCO.com](#).



Bruce Doolittle, Sr. (far left) was recognized at Blackwater Hatchery for the second Pink Tag bass catch.

Bruce Doolittle, Sr. was recognized next at Blackwater Hatchery near Holt, FL and received identical prizing from the Pink Tag promotion partners. TrophyCatch partners also wanted to award anglers who attempted to land a tagged bass so all anglers who had an approved catch from a Pink Tag water, were entered into a quarterly random drawing for a pair of [Bajío Sunglasses](#) valued at \$200. Tag reports are an important part of fisheries research and contribute to understanding and managing fish populations, and these special Pink Tags also helped to highlight Florida trophy bass fishing locales across the state. Thank you to our conservation partners who made the Pink Tag promotion both fun and rewarding!

TrophyCatch Season 13 has reached its midpoint, and you can continue to submit your catches of bass 8 lbs. and heavier at [TrophyCatch.com](#). Remember that at the new website TrophyCatch participants with an existing [GoOutdoorsFlorida \(GOF\) account](#) can use their GOF login to access their TrophyCatch/Big Catch account. All customers who have previously purchased a hunting or fishing license in Florida already have a GOF account. This should streamline logging into your TrophyCatch account. Current program stats are listed below, and we hope that one of your catches will be added here in the near future!

- 12,746 Lunker Club (8-9.9 lbs.)
- 3,217 Trophy Club (10-12.9 lbs.)
- 162 Hall of Fame (13+ lbs.)
- **16,125 TOTAL approved submissions to date**

[Register for TrophyCatch](#) or view approved angler catches to help plan your next fishing trip at [TrophyCatch.com](#). Follow [TrophyCatch Facebook](#) for featured big bass, program updates and partner highlights. For more news and freshwater information also follow us on the [FishReelFlorida Instagram](#).

Featured Fish: Oscar

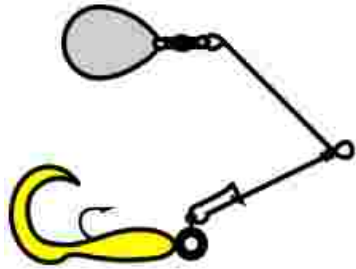
Size: The [State Record](#) is 2.34 pounds.

The Big Catch minimum qualifying sizes are 1.25 pounds or 11 inches for adults, and 0.75 pounds or 8 inches for youth (see [BigCatchFlorida.com](#)).



Identification and similar species: A dark fish, the Oscar is black with variable olive to red markings on most of the body. The key identification aid is the bright red eyespot at the base of the tail. Oscars have a stout, more oval body shape than native bream and a thick mucus coat on the body. Young fish have wavy white and orange markings on a black background.

Angling qualities: Oscars provide hard-fighting, panfish-type fishing and are a perfect spring or summer target. The Oscar strikes a variety of baits including crickets, live worms, Missouri minnows, and grass shrimp. The best artificial baits include small jigs tipped with cut bait and small spinnerbaits or Beetle Spins; fly



fishing with a variety of sinking flies is also productive. Oscars provide a boom-or-bust fishery since they may periodically experience winter kills. But when abundant, angler catch rates are exceptional. There are no bag or size limits for this nonnative species. The white, flaky meat has good flavor.

Where to catch them: Most abundant in canals of the [Everglades Water Conservation Areas](#) of Collier, western Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties, where this species ranks second in popularity only to largemouth bass. Occurs throughout south Florida, but typically not as abundant as in marsh-related canals.

Interesting facts: The native range of this nonnative includes the Orinoco, La Plata, and Amazon river basins in South America. The Oscar was one of first nonnative fishes reported in Florida in the late 1950s. The female typically lays about 3,000 eggs and both parents can occasionally be seen guarding hundreds of young in shallow water along shorelines.

Tip: Catching an Oscar, Peacock bass, and Mayan cichlid in the same day will net you an Exotic Slam certificate! The fish can be any size. Check the [Big Catch FAQ](#) for details!



Fish images by Duane Raver, Jr. and Diane Rome Peebles

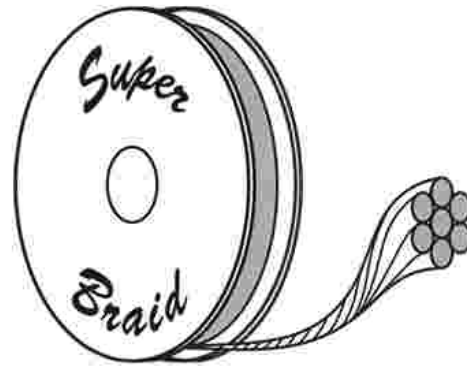
Braided Line Basics Part 1



Modern braided lines offer incredible strength in a small diameter.

“The more things change, the more they stay the same!” This can be true of both life and fishing, and a good example is line. When braided Dacron was introduced around 1950, it was a modern marvel and a big step up from previous silk and cotton lines. Although monofilament was introduced only a few years later, early products were too springy and stiff. Not until better refined

monofilaments like Stren hit the market did the vast majority of anglers switch to mono. It was thinner, more abrasion-resistant, maintenance-free, had better knot strength — and was almost invisible. Mono ruled the roost until the 1990s, when advanced braids like Spiderwire made from super-fibers such as Dyneema, Kevlar, and Spectra hit the market . . . bringing fishing lines full circle back to braid!

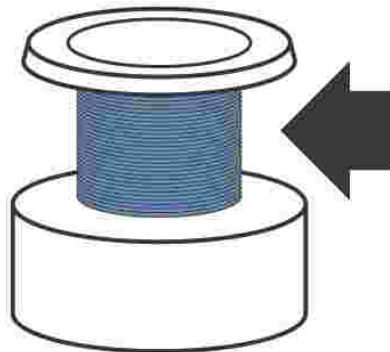


Braided Line Test	Monofilament Equivalent Diameter
10 lbs	2 lbs
15 lbs	4 lbs
20 lbs	6 lbs
30 lbs	8 lbs
40 lbs	10 lbs
50 lbs	12 lbs

Braided line is much thinner than monofilament, offering improved line handling and spool capacity.

The biggest advantage of modern braids is their small diameter compared to monofilament lines. For example, 20-pound braid has the diameter of only 6-pound-test monofilament. This offers the best of both worlds with amazing strength, plus the smooth handling, higher line capacity, and longer casts of a much lighter line.

If you are a new braid user, however, you have a few new tricks to learn. First of all, super-slick braided lines will slip on the shaft of the spool. To prevent this, try putting a small backing layer of monofilament on the reel first, then tying and spooling on the braid. Some manufacturers even include foam tape with their lines to serve as spool backing. Loosely wound braid on a spool can dig down into itself and bind, so when you spool up, apply more line tension than you may be used to.



You also can't use braid on cheap or older rods with chrome-plated wire guides. Most modern ceramic or metal guides will handle braid without grooving. But, if you're thinking of using braid on an old rod or one pulled from the bargain barrel, be

aware of this potential problem. Check the tip-top guide in particular. If your braided line is breaking unexpectedly, this might be another sign that it is grooving your guides — which are abrading and cutting the line in return. If this happens, it's probably time for a new rod. The same applies to older spinning reels, too. Modern reels with roller guides will handle braid, but your old spinner with a fixed, chrome-plated line roller might start grooving. Watch for this and if you see grooving, it's time for a new reel.



Another fact to keep in mind is that even though that braided line might be the diameter of 6-pound test, it's actually 20-pound test. So it might cast just fine on a light rod and reel designed for 6-pound monofilament, but neither of those components may be able to handle 20 pounds of strain if you have the drag cranked all the way down and hook a large fish. You can break a rod or warp a reel spool if you don't select and use a rod and reel rated for braided line. This is more of a factor with older gear, but even with a modern

outfit be sure to check the maximum recommended line test.

One of the few potential disadvantages of braid is how limp it is. While this is a plus when casting, the line can wrap your rod tip or tangle much more easily than mono. If you do get a tangle, braid also welds itself into a permanent knot much more readily than mono. Braided lines cost more than monofilament, and you don't want to discard 30 feet of good line because you can't untie a knot that develops that far back on the spool. Be *extra* careful not to accidentally pull a tangle tight when you get one. While somewhat stiffer braids are available, most anglers prefer the silky-smooth way that limp braid handles.

Despite this limpness, an advantage of braid in most situations is the fact that it has almost no stretch. Monofilament is quite stretchy, evident to any angler who's ever had to break a mono line off a solid object such as a submerged stump. Braid, on the other hand, is tight as a wire — excellent for strike detection and for solid hook-setting through thick Texas-rigged plastics into tough fish mouths. Most anglers will probably notice a nice improvement in their hookup ratio when they try braid.

So, if your fishing line hasn't come "full circle" yet, there are lots of reasons to give braid a try! The next issue will cover more braid topics, including knots.

[Featured Site: Headwaters Lake/Fellsmere Reservoir](#)



Fellsmere Reservoir has gone from farmland to world class fishery!

Location: Indian River County

Size: ~10,000 acres

Description: [Headwaters Lake \(aka Fellsmere Reservoir\)](#) is a 10,000 acre manmade lake located in Indian River County that sits adjacent to [Stick Marsh/Farm 13](#). During the first part of the 20th century, this area was drained and converted for agricultural practices. The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) purchased this land and flooded it starting in 2015 to serve as flood control and nutrient removal for the Upper St. Johns River Basin. Prior to flooding, FWC and SJRWMD partnered to conduct extensive habitat and fisheries restoration efforts to enhance the fish and wildlife habitat and produce a world class fishery. From 2011-2014 FWC invested \$1.35 million in habitat projects at Headwaters including shaping the bottom contours of the future reservoir by creating lower and higher elevations (holes, trenches, drop-offs, humps, and islands, *see photos below*). Shortly after flooding in 2016 FWC stocked 1 million Florida bass fingerlings, 145,000 black crappie, 374,000 redear sunfish and 345,000 bluegill to help jumpstart the sportfish population here.



Before (top) and after photos of the bottom contour project conducted by FWC at Headwaters Lake/Fellsmere Reservoir.

During the first four years, post-flooding, there was no boat ramp and fishing access was limited to non-motorized vessels (e.g., canoe and kayak) in only a limited area of the reservoir. During these four years biologists documented tremendous numbers of bass with extremely fast growth. The area began to grow in popularity with both bass anglers and duck hunters. On August 10, 2020, the Headwaters Lake boat ramp opened for the first time and the access facility was built in cooperation between the SJRWMD and FWC's Boating Improvement Fund, which is supported by Sportfish Restoration Funding. Since the opening of the boat ramp, the FWC has monitored angling effort, catch, and angler success. From 2020-2024, Fellsmere has averaged about 160,000+ angling hours annually and a bass catch rate of 1.40 bass

per hour (one of the highest in the state). Furthermore, people from all over the country have traveled to fish Fellsmere for its world-class fishing opportunities (*below*). Fellsmere started generating TrophyCatch submissions of bass 8 pounds and larger in 2017/2018 and since then has seen over 400 TrophyCatch submissions including two Hall of Fame catches weighing 13+ pounds.

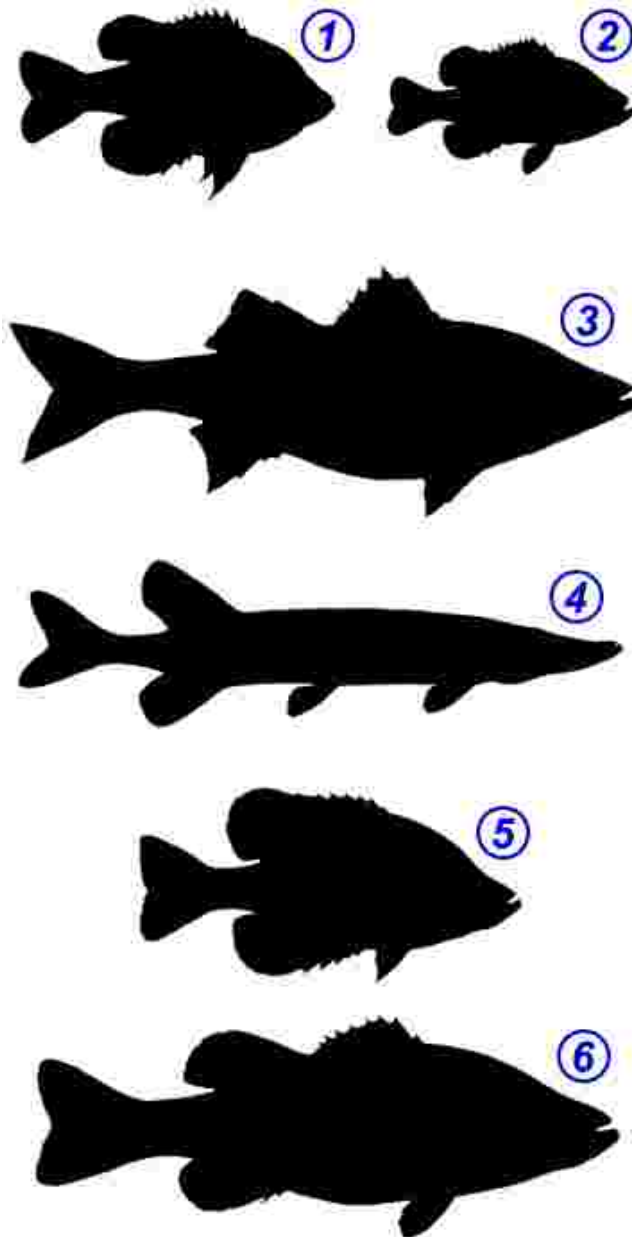


Home zip codes from anglers fishing at Headwaters from the 2023-2024 FWC annual creel survey. The site has generated national attention.

Note: In June 2022 FWC implemented a rule change as part of the Florida Trophy Bass Project to include catch-and-release of all Florida bass and the required use of circle hooks when fishing with natural bait greater than three inches. Even though the overall release rate was high (99%), this regulation helps protect the potential harvest of trophy size Florida bass.

Fisheries Biology: The Shape of Fish

Fish are a diverse group of animals! They come in all shapes and sizes, based on their lifestyle and ecology. Does the fish hover in a placid lake, or constantly swim to hold position in a swift river? Does it eat vegetation, or does it feed on minnows? Does that minnow eater ambush its prey at close range, or chase it down from a distance with a long dash? You don't need to know all those details to try to identify the fish below, but you should be able to identify some of them just by their silhouette! Each distinctive shape has a specific purpose that matches the fish to its environment. Answers are at the bottom of the newsletter.



Fish illustrations modified from Duane Raver, Jr.

Answers to fish quiz: (1) Sunfish (most are similar in shape); (2) Warmouth (the large mouth is the give-away); (3) Striped, white, or sunshine bass; (4) Pickerel (or pike though does not occur in Florida); (5) Crappie; (6) Florida/largemouth bass.

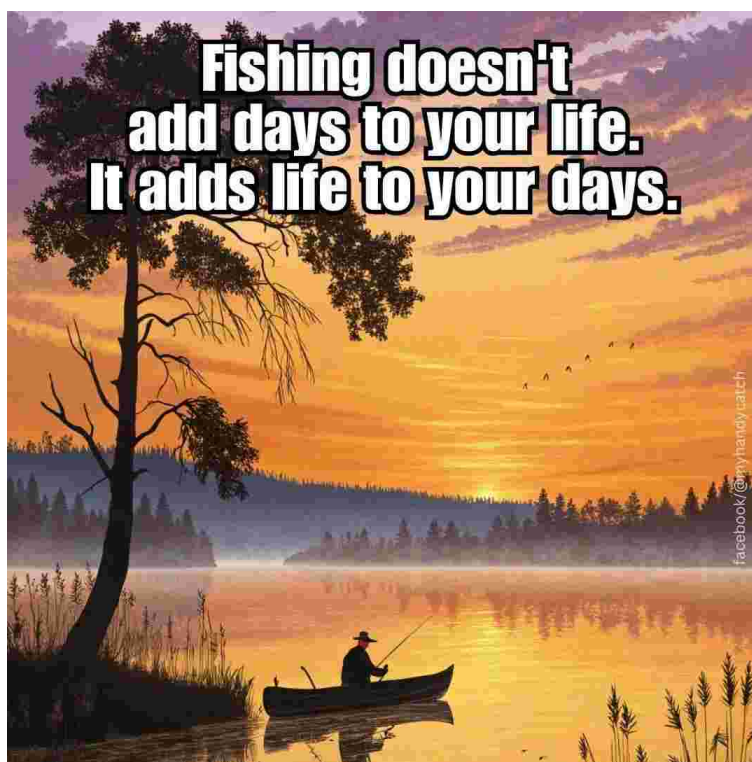




At the March meeting Captain Dave Rieumont gave us first hand accounts of his involvement with Make a Wish foundation. His stories were both uplifting and sorrowful; melancholy and wonderfully reflective. They told of his experience taking these kids fishing and how it changed their life, and also his.



Tee shirt drawing winner Carl Mogavero (L) and 50/50 (\$70) winner Bill Silk (R)



See you all at the meeting!

Tight lines!!

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