Your October 2026 Newsletter!

1 message

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New Port Richey
Fish ON! Fishing Club
www.FishOnClub.us
Fishing – Socializing - Community Service

Your October 2026 Newsletter!

The next general membership meeting will be Tuesday, October 13. Doors open at 6:30, meeting starts at 7:00. Our guest speaker for the evening will be Captain Jared Simonetti of Clearwater Fishing Company.

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The guest speaker at the September meeting was Captain Gene Hammond a local charter captain as well as a long distance delivery captain.



Captain Gene Hammond

General Membership Meeting Minutes September 8, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President Mark Morningstar at 7:00pm.

Our guest speaker for the evening was Captain Gene Hammond who is a local charter captain as well as a longer distance boat delivery captain. He started by telling us some stories while he was delivering several sailboats from the British Virgin Islands to New York. He then went into the details of fishing for grouper. He said that there were over 140 species of grouper but only 12-14 different ones are found in this area. Different rigs and rigging techniques were discussed in detail as well as where to find grouper, what to use for bait and how

to cook them were all part of the excellent presentation.

This month's social dinner will be September 16 at the Leaning Tower of Pizza. Next month's social will be at Las Perlas Mexican Restaurant on October 21st.

Our Wish to Fish subsidiary had a charter yesterday September 7th – there were 20 kids and 9 adults aboard and there were plenty of grunt caught. The excursion ended early, however, since it was quite rough out. The next charter will be October 11 with the Boy Scouts.

The current free-to-play club tournament for all members is for both trout and snook. There are a few entries so far and it was once again emphasized that to be eligible you must submit a fishing report on the club website.

We are still looking for a chairman to host our fall picnic on November 14th, and if no one steps up to organize it there will be no picnic.

A lot of members told us about their recent fishing activities.

It was mentioned that if members wanted to, they could charter the Miss Virginia and if enough members, along with outside friends or, gasp, even spouses, they could all have a fun day together out on the water. The rate is $3,000 per day so if 15 people signed up it would be $200 per person. More people attending would be less for all aboard with the total cost being divided up accordingly.

The 50/50 winner was Bill Herr - $45.

The next general membership meeting will be October 13th.

There were 18 members and guests in attendance.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05.

Respectfully submitted,

John Grieder

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Other club news: **Since we could not get a chairman for our fall picnic it has been cancelled!**

Our social dinners have resumed. **Our next social dinner will be at Las Perlas Mexican Restaurant, 5003 Trouble Creek Road, New Port Richie. The fun starts at 5:30. The November social will be at the Gulf Harbors Yacht Club, 3926 Marine Parkway, New Port Richie, on November 19.**

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From the FWC



TrophyCatch is excited to announce Season 15 and the "First to 15" challenges!

Since 2012, TrophyCatch has brought anglers, fishing industry partners, and fisheries biologists together with a simple idea: catch, document and release Florida's trophy bass. Anglers with approved catches weighing eight pounds or more earn recognition and rewards while providing FWC biologists with valuable information that supports trophy bass research and management.

For Season 15, which began October 1, TrophyCatch is going even bigger with special promotions:

The first angler to have an approved bass weighing 15 pounds or more during season 15 will earn a special prize package. These exceptionally large fish are among the rarest bass swimming in

Florida waters and documenting them provides important information about the fish capable of reaching such extraordinary sizes.

TrophyCatch will also award the first angler to reach 15 approved catches during the season with another special prize package, giving anglers another reason to keep fishing, documenting and releasing trophy bass throughout this next season. Follow TrophyCatch on social media (links below) to stay updated on exciting Season 15 catches and announcements!

Current program totals for approved submissions are:

- **13,675 Lunker Club (8-9.9 lbs.) bass**
- **3,454 Trophy Club (10-12.9 lbs.)**
- **178 Hall of Fame (13+ lbs.)**
- **17,307 TOTAL approved bass submissions to date**

Note: TrophyCatch Season 14 has ended. If you have bass catches from October 1, 2025 - September 30, 2026 you still have until October 15, 2026 to submit them to TrophyCatch!



Register for TrophyCatch or view approved angler catches to help plan your next fishing trip at TrophyCatch.com. Follow TrophyCatch on Facebook and Instagram for featured big bass, program updates and partner highlights.

New state record jaguar guapote



Angler Xzavier Peon holds the new jaguar guapote state record, photo by Carlos Cuenco.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) fisheries biologists certified a new state record jaguar guapote weighing 3.02 pounds and measuring 16 inches long, caught by 16-year-old angler Xzavier Peon from Miami. Xzavier caught his jaguar guapote in the Westwood Lakes area with live bait.

Jaguar guapote are found primarily in the urban canal systems of southeast Florida. The jaguar guapote was made eligible for state record status in 2012, and the first state record for the species was certified in 2017. That record of 2.78 pounds stood for nine years until Xzavier's catch was confirmed in September 2026.

Jaguar guapote are one of more than 30 nonnative freshwater fish species that have become established in Florida. The FWC strongly encourages anglers to catch, keep and eat nonnative fish (except legally introduced peacock bass and triploid grass carp) to control their numbers and reduce potential impacts on native fish. Most

nonnative fish provide excellent table fare. In addition, releasing fish from aquariums into the wild or moving nonnative fish between water systems is illegal and could produce detrimental effects on native fish and Florida's ecosystems.

Anglers can check the current freshwater state records at FWC's State Record page, and can notify the nearest FWC regional office if they believe they have caught a record fish.

How to submit a Florida freshwater state record



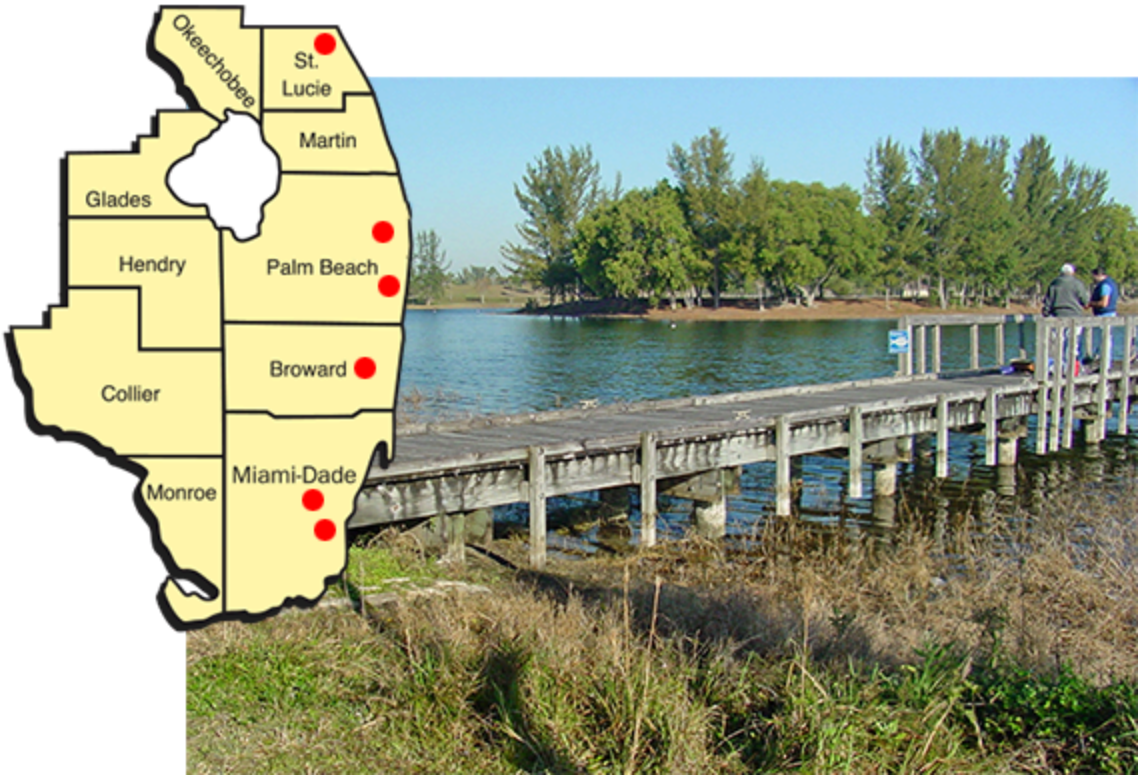
Caught a BIG one? This is what a lucky angler needs to do when they reel in a potential catch of a lifetime:

1. **Weigh your catch and then check the Florida freshwater state records page to see if you have a new record candidate! Be prepared to provide a photo of the entire fish on a scale with the weight legible.**
2. **Contact the FWC: To properly certify a new Florida state record freshwater fish, the angler must contact the FWC by calling an FWC regional office listed on the FWC website (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). An FWC biologist must confirm the fish species and potential record weight.**

3. **Obtain certified weight: To establish a new record, an FWC employee must witness the fish being weighed on a certified scale. Staff will provide directions on how to best accomplish this.**

Once an angler contacts the FWC, a biologist will provide direction on how to best work through the certification process. Keep these steps in mind and you'll be prepared to certify a next Florida freshwater state record!

Featured Site: FWC South Region Fish Management Areas



FWC's South Region Fish Management Areas (FMAs) provide good fishing adjacent to some of Florida's most urban locales. This is the Okeeheelee FMA fishing pier.

Location: Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties

Size: 4 to 157 acres

Description: Nearly one third of Florida's ever-growing population can be found in peninsular South Florida. The FWC's Fish Management Areas (FMA) provide access to local fishing locations across the state. Each FMA is a pond, lake or other body of water established for the management of freshwater fish as a partnership effort with a local

cooperator, often the county parks and recreation department. The FWC's Division of Freshwater Fisheries manages about 80 FMAs throughout the state. In many cases, these waterbodies are stocked with channel catfish, largemouth bass or sunfish. Automatic fish feeders and fish attractors may be present to concentrate sportfish for anglers. Below are some of the South Region's most popular FMAs. One may be closer than you think! Note that a freshwater fishing license is required for FMA waters unless an angler is exempt. Also, special bag limits and gear restrictions apply on these lakes. For additional information on each site click the linked name for the FMA brochure and map.

Okeeheelee FMA in Palm Beach County (shown above): This is South Region's largest FMA at 157 acres. Bass tend to be small but numerous, making this a good place to learn bass fishing or just have fun with light tackle or a fly rod. Bass are present throughout the lake and like to frequent the spikerush (pencil grass) edges. A small 4-6" plastic worm is ideal here; start with black and try other colors until you start getting strikes. Sunfish throughout the lake will hit small lures or flies but are most easily caught on red wigglers or crickets. Note that channel catfish are stocked in the smaller 11-acre section adjacent to the Alligator Pavilion if you want to target catfish. Chicken or beef livers or prepared catfish "stink baits" all work well for cats. Note that gasoline motors are not allowed, making this an ideal kayak or canoe spot. The lake offers a paved boat ramp with trailer parking and a fishing pier.

Caloosa FMA in Palm Beach County is one of the area's smallest at 4 acres. You can easily fish around the entire lake in a morning. Bass are not abundant but may reach several pounds in weight. Note that all black bass must be released immediately. Peacock bass are present here and will take minnow imitations or small shiners. Sunfish and Mayan cichlid are abundant, with live worms or crickets being the best bait for either. Channel catfish are stocked here annually and are readily caught on chicken or beef livers and stink baits.



This 12.5-pound channel catfish was caught-and-released in Plantation Heritage FMA. The fish was stocked by FWC about 10 years before!

Plantation Heritage FMA **in Broward County: This 6-acre lake offers easy shoreline access around much of the pond. Bass are present in moderate sizes with the usual standbys such as plastic worms and minnow imitations doing well. Sunfish are abundant in the lake, and live worms or crickets are the best bait; vary the bobber depth if you are not getting bites. Stocked channel catfish do well here with fish over 12 pounds documented; chicken or beef livers and commercial catfish baits can all produce cats.**



Tropical Park's northern-most lake offers easy shoreline access for a fun family fishing trip and maybe a peacock bass!

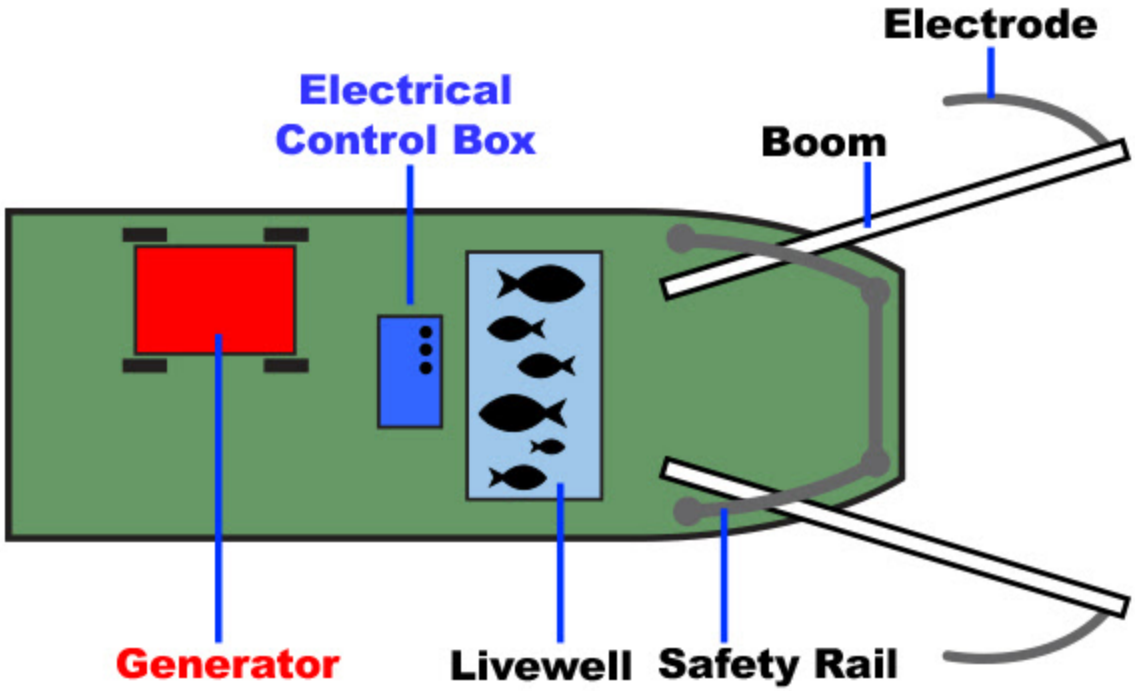
The northern-most Tropical Park Lake, Miami-Dade County: This 11-acre lake offers good shoreline access. Bass of average size can be found here, and standard bass fare including plastic worms and minnow imitations work well. Butterfly peacock bass add to this FMA's diversity with live shiners being the best bait for both bass species. Sunfish, Mayan cichlid and tilapia can be caught on live worms. Channel catfish are stocked each year and can reach over 10 pounds, with the same baits—chicken and beef livers or commercial baits—working as well here as the other FMAs.

If you've never done so, give FWC's FMAs a cast! All of Florida's FMAs are listed at the Fish Management Area Regulations page. Browse your region and you may discover a new favorite fishing hole!

Fisheries Biology: Electrofishing



When biologists wish to survey a fish population, there are a number of different techniques they can use. While the method selected will depend partly on the species of interest, electrofishing is often chosen as an excellent all-around method for general survey work. Electrofishing has a number of advantages: it targets moderate to large fish (the ones of interest to anglers, of course!), can cover a wide area (unlike a net set in a specific location), and does not harm the fish sampled. Of course, there are disadvantages, too. The electrical field, for example, only extends out to about six feet into the water (restricting survey areas to shallow shoreline zones), and certain species (such as bottom-hugging catfish) are difficult to sample consistently with electrofishing gear. However, the relative ease with which long shorelines can be covered and the susceptibility of most fish to this method makes electrofishing one of the most efficient workhorses in the fisheries biologist's stable.



Shown here is a typical electrofishing rig. An electrofishing boat is one of the most efficient ways to sample a fish population.

The basic principle is simple enough. Electricity from a generator in the boat passes through electrodes placed in the water off the bow. The electricity is carefully adjusted through a specially-design electrical control box to reduce the chances of harming fish and to achieve maximum effectiveness. At the edges of the electrical field, fish are not stunned but are actually forced to swim toward the source of the electrical current! When fish near the electrode, they are immobilized, often turning belly up. A dip-netter on the front of the boat (protected from falling in by a safety railing) scoops up the fish and places them in an aerated livewell. The fish can then be weighed, measured, or tagged prior to being safely released. Don't try this at home, though — use of electricity for fishing is dangerous and illegal without a scientific collecting permit!



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Tournament Board

2026 Tournaments

Fishing tournaments are easy and fun and there's nothing to sign up for -- these are all free to play for all members! Just make a catch, follow the guidelines posted below and you're in!

These tournaments are Free-to-Play for all members!

Our current tournament is:

August 1 - October 31 - Snook and Trout

(Please note changes to guidelines (#6) below) -- Also note there will be one additional species added for each future tournament.

Upcoming tournaments include:

November 1 to December 31 - Mackerel and Hogfish

Winners circle

May 1 to July 31 Ladyfish and Snapper tournament:

Ladyfish:
1st place - Carl Mogavero - 18"
2nd place - Frank Bellizio - 15"

Snapper:
1st place - Bob Sherley - 30.5"
2nd place - Chet Jasak - 12.5"

February 1 to April 30 Trout tournament:

1st place - Frank Poggio - 18"
2nd place - Mike Spanhel - 15"
3rd place - John Grieder - 14"

There may also be a ONE DAY tournament in November. (Details to follow)

***AND*...also a $ prize (besides bragging rights) for the longest fish caught for 2026 (not including sharks).**

All guidelines below must be followed for an *automatic entry* to all tournaments

Guidelines:

1 - Catch fish (!)
2 - Measure fish
3 - Take a picture of your catch
4 - You MUST post a fishing report on the club website*
5 - Only species for each tournament posted will count. (Ex: if you catch a trout when mackerel tournament is running, it won't count)
6 - Fish caught on individually owned boats/kayaks/rentals/headboats

or from the shore are ok. Starting on a trial basis effective May 1, 2026 and until further notice, fish caught on charters will count.

7 - Sit back (and/or keep fishing) and wait for the results which will be announced at the first general membership meeting after tournament closes

Winners circle: 1st place - $25; 2nd place - $15; 3rd place - $10

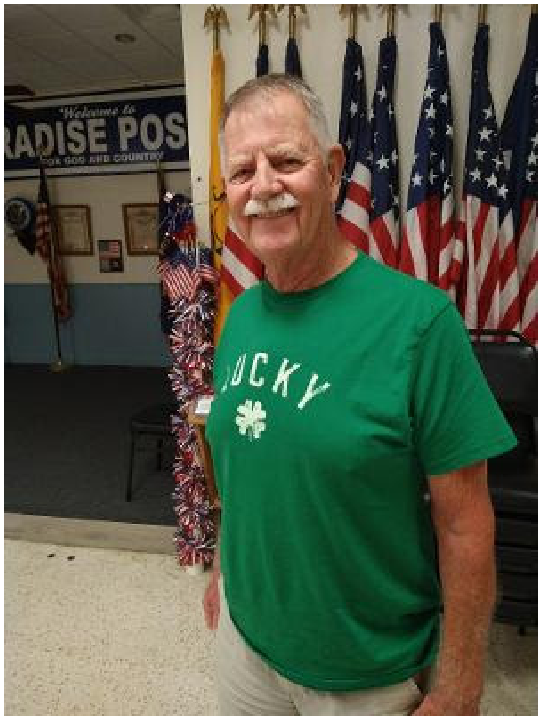
***Entering a fishing report on the club website is easy. Go to the club website (fishonclub.us) , click on 'fishing reports', then 'submit report', and enter your information along with pix. Just give it a try and you'll find the process intuitive. If you have a problem with making your report just contact any board member below for assistance. Or -- if you're still having trouble entering your fishing report: Just snap a pic and send it to John Grieder - coordinates below. If you send the pic this way please put FOC in the subject line.**

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If you're wondering where to get club apparel - here's the place!



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September meeting 50/50 winner Bill Herr. (Check out the shirt)

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thnx and a tip o'the hat to Frank Bellizio





Fish Humiliated After Being Reeled In By Little Girl With Princess Rod

thnx and a tip o'the hat to sil TN x2

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See you all at the meeting!

Tight lines!!

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