

Fishing & Hunting



By Richard Seale

Hurricane Florence recovery quashes fall fishing

The damage done by Hurricane Florence continues to impact the lives of many Carteret County citizens. As I write this, it has been six weeks since the storm kept us in its northeast quadrant as it violently moseyed past us. Businesses remain closed for repairs, workers have been out of jobs, roofs remain tarped, damaged trees still await removal, docks remain unusable or destroyed, and many folks have been forced from their homes only to have problems finding some place to live while waiting for repairs to be done. The sound of chain saws is at last dropping off, but the sounds of nail guns and hammers have replaced them.



Jen Rebman, a dedicated fisherperson and daughter of Jan and Larry Corsello, with a 16.5-inch flounder caught from the surf at Ocean Park. —Photo by Jan Corsello

Yes, fall fishing is “in,” but few boats have been passing through McNeill Inlet since the storm. Folks are just too busy dealing with downed trees, damaged houses, arguing with insurance adjusters and trying to get repair people to get to their projects. In short, many folks are just too worn out to consider fishing.

Still, a number of fishing friends have admitted they said, “Forget the to-do list; I’m going fishing.” And they did. One went to the Gulf Stream and came back with just one Mahi. Another went to the turning basin and caught some sheepshead. Jen Rebman, Jan Corsello’s daughter, caught a nice 16.5-inch legal flounder (see photo) and a false albacore in the Pine Knoll Shores surf. This fish is also known as “bloody tuna,” and its flesh tastes pretty fishy unless special steps are taken. These steps include beheading the fish to bleed it as soon as it is landed and after steaking the body, soaking the steaks in milk overnight. It still is pretty strong tasting, but it is better eating.

I have only made it out fishing one time since the storm. Gerry Smith and I went to Cape Lookout to fly fish for false albacore (which we call Fat Alberts). From the shipping channel in Morehead City to Cape Point at Lookout, the sea was empty of birds or fish. It was a discouraging run. We decided to look inside Barden Inlet. Near the red marker, we found two pods of Fat Alberts. A bunch of boats were chasing those fish as they surfaced and quickly chased them down. Gerry had not seen any fish on two previous trips. We did not hook any, but at least we saw them, and Gerry did get to put a few fly casts into them.

Rich Bingmann was on his way to McNeill Park when I had a chance to chat with this avid and skilled fisherman. He described his successful fishing in Bogue Sound. I felt his story would be even better in his own words, so I asked him if he would mind writing down what he told me and if I could include his story in this article. He graciously said yes. So here is his story.

Accompanying this article is a picture of the only legal red drum that I caught recently. The other four were all well above the 27-inch maximum slot.

One was not really hooked. It swallowed a nine-inch croaker I was reeling in, and, as soon as I got it to the boat, the drum spit the croaker out at me and took off. This drum and two others were in the 33- to 36-inch range, but the biggest one was well over 40 inches. I tried to lift this big one into the boat by the leader, but the weight of the fish broke a 25-pound test snap swivel.

I use a light action fishing rod with 8-pound line. All the fish were caught

on an orange-colored buck tail cut from a spec rig. I usually flavor the buck tail with a small piece of squid. This is the perfect rig for the person who just likes to have continuous action.

Fishing off the UNC docks, I have caught pin fish, pigfish, gray trout, speckled trout, sea mullet, black drum, cobias, sheepshead, flounder, spots, permits, blow fish, hammerhead sharks, bonnet head sharks, black fin sharks, blue fish, dog fish, toad fish and a variety of skates. In recent years, I have also been catching black sea bass well over the 13-inch limit. Any time I fish there, I can count on catching at least six different varieties of fish.

I have also caught pig fish weighing in at over a pound. If you want to have some fun, try bringing in a one-pound pig fish on light tackle.

Thank you, Rich, for sharing this informative and encouraging piece. His story shows Bogue Sound does offer some very good fishing fun not very far from our home ports here in Pine Knoll Shores. It also suggests it might be well worth the act of throwing up your hands and saying, “I’m going fishing, to heck with the to-do list.” After all, Old Man Winter is on the way.

Be sure to check out the Pine Knoll Shores Fishing Tournament report in this issue to see what fish came to the scales at weigh-in.

2018 Fishing Hall of Fame. It is once again time to send in your favorite fish photos from 2018. Please send your high-resolution photos by December 11 to shoreline@townofpks.com or to Richard Seale at rseale@ec.rr.com. We will feature the photos in the January issue of *The Shoreline*. Remember to include any photos of your children or grandchildren with their catches, and please provide names, photo credits and some appropriate brief comments for correct bragging rights.



Rich Bingmann with a red drum just small enough to be a legal keeper

—Photo courtesy of Mr. Bingman



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