

Blues Getting Larger While First King Caught Offshore



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER
ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD Brian Ricci and his dad, George, of Rhode Island, spent Brian's spring school break visiting an aunt, Louise "GIGI" Annas, and fishing from both Sunset Beach Pier and a Calabash-based headboat. "It's been good," George said as Brian reeled in two more fish.

BY TERRY POPE
Large blues and kings are starting to bite offshore while spots and flounder continue to bite well inside, area piers and marinas reported Monday morning.

The first king mackerel of the season was caught off of Ocean Isle Beach Saturday by Boice Brown of Charlotte, said George Crisp, operator of Ocean Isle Marina.

The 14-pound king was the only one caught over the weekend that had wandered in close to shore, but "they ought to be plentiful in another two weeks," Crisp said.

Fishermen had ideal weather over the weekend with temperatures climbing to around 90 degrees both Saturday and Sunday. Here are the reports from area piers and marinas:

Holden Beach Pier

For the second or third week in a row, fishermen at Holden Beach Pier have been catching blues, reported Gii Bass.

The largest blue, a 10-pounder, was caught Friday by Carolyn Blum. Blues are biting gotcha plugs while a few flounder are being caught with live minnows, cut bait and blue rigs, Bass said.

Sunset Beach Pier

Fishing at Sunset Beach pier was a "little slower than usual" over the weekend, reported Johnny Hill.

However, fishermen did manage to catch a few spots and flounder from the pier Friday and Saturday, Hill reported.

Ocean Isle Marina

Saturday was an excellent day for fishing while Sunday "everybody was just out riding around," said George Crisp.

In addition to the first king of the year caught close to shore, fishermen inside were catching spots and blues, Crisp said.

Inlet View Marina

Kings and blues were caught offshore over the weekend, reported Joe Furr of Inlet View Marina. At this time of year, there are plenty of kings about 40 miles offshore, he added.

Furr said it is time for the kings to move closer to shore. Inside fishermen were catching spots and blues over the weekend, he said.

Hughes Marina

Fishermen wandered out to the five-mile rock again this weekend and brought back more than just black sea bass, reported Allison Hughes of Hughes' Marina at Shallotte Point.

"Black fish, whiting, blues and gray trout were all biting outside," Ms. Hughes said. "Inside, the spots, a few flounder and spottail drum were biting. Taken as a whole, it was a nice weekend."

Tripp's Fishing Center

Fishing at Shallotte Point was so hectic over the weekend that Joyce Land at Tripp's Fishing Center got out her little notebook.

In it she wrote of Donnie Pennington and Phillip Hales' 11 flounder and one spottail drum caught Saturday. The fishermen are from Shallotte Point.

Two fishing couples, Paul and Ruby Floyd of Shallotte Point and Randy and Nancy Goodman, each caught five flounder, Ms. Land reported.

Flounder are being caught in the Shallotte River, inlets and waterways, she said. Spots also continue to bite.

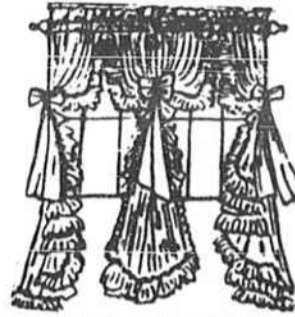


STAFF PHOTO BY TERRY POPE
CHARLES BURKHOLDER of Greensboro reeled in this blue from the Holden Beach Pier Sunday evening. One fisherman caught a 10-pound blue from the pier Friday.



SEEING IS BELIEVING. Small blues and flounder of Calabash was using last week on the Sunset Beach Pier. William Stocks went after the cut spot and fireball rig.

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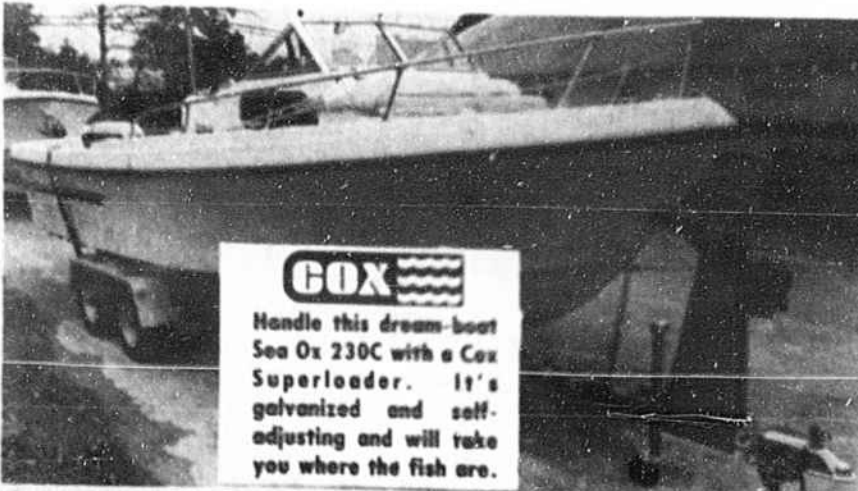
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